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"People say that life is the thing, but I prefer reading."

—answer next month. Answer to March "Who said?"—

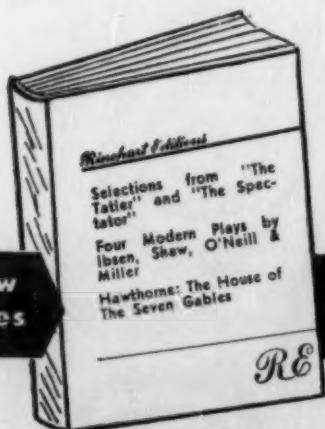
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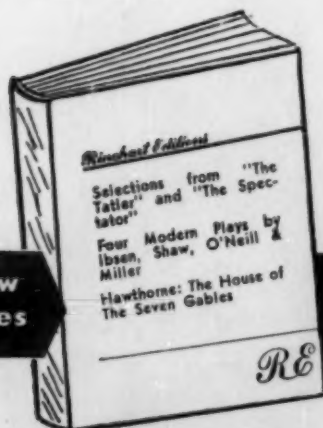
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For Readers

CHARLTON LAIRD, who exhumes the Parts, or Vestigial Remnants, of Speech, is the well-known grammarian, philologist, and novelist at Nevada. His description of the Oregon Plan to handle Freshman English during the Flood appeared in last December's *CE*. **SUMNER IVES**'s definition of parts of speech comes from a background of teaching and publication in dialects, grammar, phonology, and structural linguistics. He is an associate professor at Tulane. **RALPH B. LONG**, associate professor at Texas, winds up the symposium with a syntactic approach. **NORMAN KELVIN** ("The Failure of R. P. Warren"), with degrees from Columbia, is a part-time instructor there and at Rutgers, at the same time writing a dissertation on Meredith. **Round Table:** **ERIC M. STEEL**, professor at SUNY (Brockport), has degrees from Glasgow, Caen, and Columbia, and is

the author of *Diderot's Imagery* (1941) and *Readable Writing* (1950). **KENNETH M. ENGLAND** is assistant professor and Director of Freshman English at Georgia State. He is working on a book about the Southern gentleman in recent Southern novels. **LOUIS TAYLOR**, author of 150 published articles and stories, is an assistant professor at Arizona State. **ELINOR YAGGY**, co-author with Glenn Leggett of *Writing a Paper* (1955), teaches at U. Washington, where she took her Ph.D. **S. P. ZITNER**, assistant professor at Hampton, plays a dual role as elegist of a memorable teacher and as provoker of comments on his satirical piece of last October. **HAROLD HOLDEN**, sole speaker in the Forum, is an instructor at Penn State. **CURTIS DAHL** is an associate professor at Wheaton (Mass.) and a well-known writer on ancient and modern literature.

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to one of these magazines is \$4.00; this includes membership in the Council, with its privileges of certain book and record discounts. Closely allied to *CE* is *CCC*, the bulletin of the NCTE subsidiary, The Conference on College Composition and Communication. This unit, founded in 1949, has over a thousand members, who meet every spring and during the NCTE Thanksgiving convention. *CCC* is published quarterly, and subscriptions are \$2.00. Writers of articles and notes in this field should consider sending them to the editor, Professor Francis E. Bowman, Duke University (Durham, N.C.).

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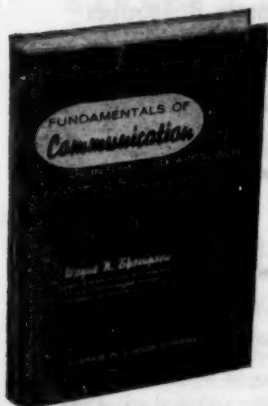
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COLLEGE ENGLISH

Volume 18

APRIL 1957

Number 7

Parts of Speech: A Symposium

The Parts, or Vestigial Remnants, of Speech

CHARLTON LAIRD

ACCORDING to Shakespeare's version of the peasant revolt of 1450, a version for which I fear there is scanty historical authority, Jack Cade murdered Lord Say for being guilty as follows:

Thou hast most traitorously corrupted the youth of the realm in erecting a grammar school . . . [and] it will be proved to thy face that thou hast men about thee that usually talk of a noun and a verb, and such abominable words as no Christian ear can endure to hear.

Christian auditory sensibilities presumably need not be pondered in considering the modern applicability of grammar, but unquestionably a gentleman of parts was long expected to command the parts of speech. To suggest now that these patrician concepts be deposed and disinherited doubtless partakes of *lèse-majesté*, contempt of the courts of grammar, even of blasphemy. But it is just that I wish to suggest, that Jack Cade's position had more justice than Shakespeare probably meant to imply, that we may do as well without people "that usually talk of a noun," although I might except verbs (I believe in the verb as function, if not in the verb as a part of speech). I wish to suggest that the notion of the parts of speech is as unnecessary, and even as deleterious, in modern American grammar as the concept of royalty is unnecessary and would be deleterious in mod-

ern American society. Particularly, it is unnecessary in teaching the use of language, and while I should not recommend executing people who "usually talk of a noun" I fear they are sometimes wasting both their time and their students'.

Are there parts of speech, and whence does the concept come? There have been parts of speech. Anglo-Saxon had strong evidences of parts of speech; that is, words had grammatical usages, which usages were indicated by systems of endings, endings which were shared by other words of the same class. The names for family relationships, for instance, were treated alike, and were treated differently from the names for abstract relationships. But we have lost most of these distinctions, both the concepts and the endings that marked them, presumably because we did not need them. For considerably more than a millennium, English has been developing a grammar different from that of its parent languages, a grammar which has little use for declensional endings, but relies much upon order, meaning, and relationship words. That is, English has developed a grammar mainly of the sort that is often called analytic or distributive. During this millennium, however, our grammarians imported from Latin the concepts of the parts of speech and most of the names for the parts themselves, at least as they still existed in Latin, where

indeed they were already becoming vague. These concepts fit modern English so badly that the most ingenious grammarians—and grammarians are ingenious—have been unable to describe, simply, accurately, and consistently, even the most familiar of the supposed parts of speech.

Something can be done. By assuming that the parts of speech exist, and then by noting everything that exemplars of these parts have in common—whether function, form, position, meaning, or whatever—something like a description can be devised. Of statements which embody the attempt, I personally like best that by Professor Paul Roberts in *Understanding Grammar*, but even this is not entirely consistent, and it is so cumbersome that few people can keep it in mind and nobody could use it to instruct the young. I suspect that the whole gingerbread edifice crumbles because we as a body of speakers no longer have much feeling for the parts of speech we have been taught or for the concept of parts of speech. I suspect that our sort of grammar has little use for such a concept, and that the sooner we can jettison the whole unwieldy lot of grammatical ballast associated with the concept, the sooner we shall get on with an understanding of our grammar and the sooner we can improve our methods of teaching.

If the traditional grammar is neither valid nor teachable, what are we to do? Shall we, as some teachers preach and many practice, abandon the teaching of grammar? I hope not. I believe that a grasp of the grammar of a language promotes the use of the language. I believe that the teaching of what we used to call grammar in this country has caused so much grief and has done so little good because we have been teaching something which is not the grammar of modern English. I believe that if we will now teach the grammar of our language, or make a modest approach toward it, we can simplify our teaching and greatly improve our results.

The next question must be practical: if we are not to teach the conventional grammar, what can we teach? The most recent suggestions extensively made are that we should teach structural linguistics, and this suggestion is plausible enough not to be rejected lightly. The technique is standard practice in dealing with primitive languages; it has greatly facilitated the teaching of English as a second tongue, but until recently it could not be attempted with more than experimental numbers of students as a means of improving the English of native speakers. No textbooks were available. Professor Charles Carpenter Fries's *The Structure of English* aroused much interest among teachers but not much conviction that it could be used to exorcise tautology at the freshman level. Within the past year, however, the following three volumes have appeared independently, each calculated in its own way to adapt structural linguistics to teaching: Paul Roberts, *Patterns of English* (Harcourt, Brace), Donald J. Lloyd and Harry R. Warfel, *American English in Its Cultural Setting* (Knopf), and Harold Whitehall, *Structural Essentials of English* (Harcourt, Brace), a greatly improved revision of the same author's earlier mimeographed versions.

This is not the place to review these volumes. As books, I believe, they must command our admiration; they are done by scholars who could make more money writing conventional textbooks than I fear they are likely to earn from these, though I wish them millions. They show evidence of labor, learning, and good sense in distilling difficult procedures into relatively simple statements. If we eventually teach English by structural linguistics, these will be standard works or indispensable pioneers. Professor Roberts's book, directed at the high schools, is a frank attempt to make Fries friable. The Lloyd-Warfel volume, a college rhetoric of which something more than half is devoted to phonemic and morphemic analysis, also uses Fries's four so-called form classes. Pro-

fessor Whitehall uses his own analysis, which makes notable use of headed and non-headed word groups. Guessing at the probable relative success of these books is a hazardous business, and most teachers of English are likely to note sympathetically Professor Whitehall's warning, "A bridge of explanation between the old and the new, between the traditional and linguistic approaches to composition teaching, must be erected very cautiously and carefully" (p. vi). He adds that his own book is intended to do no more than "provide some essential caissons, piers, and arches," and one suspects that the other books should claim no more. Professor Roberts implies that his method has been taught successfully at San Jose State College and in Lincoln High School, San Jose, California (p. 38), and my respect for him personally encourages me to believe him. Still I cannot help reminding myself that a superior teacher can teach almost anything successfully, but that no teacher can thrive in a system he does not understand and trust.¹

In other words, until these books are classroom-tested by large numbers of garden-variety teachers who are generally plagued by indolence and further irritated by being asked to learn a strange system, we shall not know much about the volumes as textbooks. Furthermore, we shall need to see what happens when teachers who have digested Whitehall have dragged pupils through Roberts in high school and through Lloyd-Warfel in college. This process will present difficulties, since although the men resemble one another in philosophy their texts differ in procedures. The three books offer a good start—and

until now we had no start—but they do not, I fear, provide a finished and consistent method. And many teachers will reject the whole approach, categorically if blindly.

I surmise that the dubious—and the dubious we have always with us—will object to structural linguistics on many grounds, at least two of which seem to me to have considerably validity, the one practical, the other philosophical. First, let me mention the practical, since I have been, in effect, discussing it already. If we are to attempt teaching English in the near future by extensive use of structural linguistics, we are presented with at least the following staggering facts: (1) structural linguistics is a difficult concept and an exacting practice, when compared, for instance, with an engaging amusement like general semantics; (2) the linguists themselves do not as yet agree entirely, either in the analysis of English or in a method of teaching it; (3) no large-scale test of the approach using unselected teachers has yet been attempted, and (4) there is no immediate prospect of producing a considerable body of teachers versed in structural linguistics; in fact, we lack even a scattering of teachers of those who may eventually be prepared to teach the technique. These limitations need not restrict more extensive experimental testing. They need not restrict teachers of English methodology from preparing prospective teachers to comprehend the new books; most English majors are graduated without *structural linguistics* as words in their vocabularies, not to mention this discipline being part of their experience. No book widely used in language courses makes use of structural linguistics. These limitations do, however, force us to conclude that in the immediate future not many school systems will wish or be able to rely mainly upon structural linguistics for most of the teaching of reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Furthermore, some of us are likely to retain philosophic doubts as to the ade-

¹ If the Ford or any other foundation has money they do not know how to spend, I suggest that they import an engaging and learned Kwakiutl Indian and ask him to teach English with Kwakiutl grammar; if he is a truly superior teacher I would predict for him a considerable degree of success. Doubtless, the sounder our principles the better our teaching, but almost anything that makes language fresh and intriguing promotes its study.

quacy of structural linguistics. I would concede at once that if it works as a teaching device we need not ask why it works or reject it because we cannot explain its working, but I suspect an inadequacy in the theory which lies back of structural study, and I would expect this theoretical inadequacy to be reflected in its practical application—in fact, I seem to see it reflected in the volumes thus far published. I have not space here to work this out in any detail, but I might suggest the sort of thing I have in mind. Take a sentence like the following: *Mary called up the dumb waiter.* To a structuralist this sentence has only one grammatical description, but to a functionalist *up* is part of a modifier if the sentence means that Mary thrust her head into the dumb-waiter shaft and shouted up, and part of the verb if the sentence means that Mary called down the shaft for someone to send up the little elevator, or telephoned to a waiter who was either mute or not bright.

Structural linguistics presumes that the study of language is a science, that it can be treated as phenomena, that it can be reduced to an objective description, and that when it is described objectively, it is described. I doubt this assumption, although I know I am emitting heresy when I suggest that the study of language is not a science, at least not a science in more than a limited way. Physics is a science because the physicist can make the assumption, among others, that an atom has behavior patterns but no purpose. In this he may be wrong. For all we know, atoms may have psychoses, be troubled with traumas, and long for heaven, but we have no evidence that atoms have purpose, and the description of them that the physicist provides is so consistent that we assume that a scientific statement is adequate for an atom.

But these assumptions are not equally valid for language. Language does have purpose, and as we encounter it, our main specimens for study are those emitted by individuals who had a purpose when they

did the emitting. This purpose may be difficult to determine; it certainly is not always the transference of meaning, for instance, but it is mainly purposive, and even if it is not always purposive, we have, in making the admission, only added one more imponderable. Thus in a way the study of language is more like theology than science, for in theology we must always allow for a purpose, a purpose which must be to a degree inscrutable. There is something godlike in man when he speaks, and that which is godlike does not submit to science. We may start on the assumption that language is without purpose, and examine it as though it has no purpose, as an anatomist carves up a cadaver on the assumption that it has no life, but I believe we must recognize that in dealing with language scientifically we are ignoring one of the most important facts about it, as the anatomist must recognize that he is dealing with something less than life when he pokes among the formaldehyded remains. Thus it seems to me important to recognize that structural linguistics is likely to gain results limited by its assumptions, and I do not always find that structuralists are modestly cognizant of the limitations which their assumptions should force upon them.

If, then, the traditional approach through the parts of speech is neither sound nor very useful, and if the programs of the structural linguists are as yet experimental, what are we to do about the procession of youngsters who insist on growing up, whether or not we as English teachers are ready for them? I suggest that we examine recent linguistic study to see what it contains certain enough to be trusted and simple enough to be used. Particularly, we should look for concepts which are already sufficiently familiar so that they can be taught without wholesale re-education of our practicing teachers. Much has been learned that can be so described; personally I am impressed with what might be comprehended under the following three propositions:

(1) Mature communication in English relies upon patterns within and between sentences.

(2) These patterns reveal a variety of relationships among the subject, complement, and verb, and various sorts of subordination and co-ordination.

(3) Patterns are made clear by the meanings of words and by grammatical devices, mainly by the position of words, the use of words to signal and to show relationships, and inflection, in that descending order of importance.

Now, if this be true, some corollaries follow. One is that if we are to teach English we should teach sentence patterns. Another is that the functions are important but that the parts of speech are not; being a subject is important but being a noun is less so, and being a gerund as against being part of a verb is still less important.

What then is important? Obviously, subjects are. But curiously, subjects are not much taught, at least not to the students who come to me. These students have been told that sentences must have them, as children must have fathers; they have been taught to recognize and to shun the illegitimate waifs that have no subjects to father them. They have never been taught how to choose a subject, or that choosing a subject is a matter of some consequence. Of course it is, especially in a sentence having our kind of grammar. The first name written down usually becomes the subject; if it is chosen badly, the whole sentence goes awry. But the student does not know this; he knows only that he has to write on "Why I Came to the University," and since he has thought much about coming to the university but little about expressing himself, he sets down the first handsome word that enters his head—"The reason. . . ." Now he is started, and remembering his subject he gets that in—"The reason why I have come to the university. . . ." By now he has gone a long way, but he has not yet said anything nor has he found a verb.

He adds the readiest verb and goes on, "The reason why I have come to the university is because there being a law that states you've got to get a college degree to hang out his morticians shingle, this being my goal in life." By now the young man has compounded a jumble which is ingeniously bad, partly because he is not very bright, but partly also because he has never been told about subjects in any but a pedantic way. A fair percentage of the misbegotten sentences which drive teachers of English nearer and nearer the insane brink are as confused as they are because they start with inappropriate subjects. I have yet to experience that longed-for moment when some student will raise his hand and ask, "Isn't the real trouble with that sentence that the writer did not choose his subject carefully?" That has not happened to me in a quarter of a century of teaching composition. But hundreds of hopeful hands have been raised to introduce the question, "Isn't it true that you should never end a sentence with a preposition?" And when I ask, "What's wrong with ending a sentence with a preposition, and how do you know it's a preposition?" the student usually makes clear that I am a traitor to a grammar founded upon the parts of speech, and that I have betrayed him in his hour of triumph.

What else is important? Obviously, predication is, but predication is something more than *I see the cat*, in which *see* is the verb and *cat* the complement. Consider the following: *You ought to have had the good sense to have thought of that before.* That may be called the complement, but what is the verb? It seems to involve something like *having good sense*, but *sense* would be called a noun and its function seems to be that of a complement. Nor is this sentence unusual. Anyone can write down hundreds of sentences in which the supposed nouns, pronouns, adverbs, and adjectives cannot be sorted out from the verbs:

You could not want anything better for your children.

You might as well make a start toward having your family now.

I am going to go ahead getting dinner.

I expect to have a look into his way of conducting statistics.

I took a plane for St. Louis to participate in a panel concerned with discussing what use to make of linguistics in teaching English to native speakers.

Clearly, a sentence like the last is not about taking planes, nor do we contribute much to an understanding of structure if we start sorting the words from *plane* to *speakers* as mainly nouns, prepositions, and various sorts of verbals. The verbal ideas are scattered all through the latter part of the sentence, and so are the words which seem to be completing the verbal notions. Deciding where the verb ends and the complement begins might be a hazardous gesture, but if we are more interested in understanding than in assorting, we may not have much difficulty. If we recognize the function of being a verb and the function of being a complement as parts of the complicated and fluid process of predication we can grasp what is happening even in a sentence like this.² If we center the student's attention on choosing an appropriate subject, following it with an expressive verb and adequately completing this verb, we are likely to find that the student's writing improves. His sentence-structure will improve further if we will encourage him to respect sentence-patterns appropriate to the passive voice and the postponed subject, to use these patterns only for the purposes that require them, and to follow most of his subjects with expressive verbs in the active voice.

In addition to predication, what else is important? Obviously, the patterns of subordination and co-ordination are.

² This is no place to endeavor constructing a grammar based on function; I have made a beginning, in *The Miracle of Language* (1953), pp. 181-210.

These, again, seem not much taught. Students labor to distinguish adjectives and adverbs—and I should labor, too, if I had to make the distinction—but they seem not much aware that modification is part of the whole problem of subordination, nor do they have any firm grasp of what subordination can do for the young writer. The infinite variety and variation of subordination is not usually taught them, nor is their attention sufficiently directed to the various and subtle means by which the writer signals subordination to the reader. The result is that students cannot write with fine distinctions nor can they make clear sense of prose which embodies precision. Co-ordination seems to be taught somewhat more, but I should say not enough.

What use, then, should we make of grammar in teaching today's children? I suggest we emphasize the functions within the sentence, that is (1) the manner in which the subject, verb, and complement work together to form clear and vigorous predication; (2) the importance of co-ordination and subordination, and the roles that modification and parallelism play in these; and (3) the variety and the subtlety of relationship words. We should learn more and more to apply in these essential studies the observations brought before us by the descriptive linguists, the intricacy of our sentence patterns, for instance, and the usefulness of signals. If we will do this, I believe, grammar will grow again into the important place it once enjoyed—in Classical times, for example—and still deserves in our curriculum, an intriguing subject and a useful discipline in learning to apply man's most powerful tool, language.

Meanwhile, what should we do about the parts of speech? I should grant them the limited tolerance appropriate to vestigial remnants. Like a good many other people, I am in no haste to dispose of my vermiform appendix. It probably does little good, but so long as it does no great harm I shall allow it to do as much good

as it can. Similarly, if a student knows about nouns, and I can make use of the information to explain complement-verb relationships, I propose no operation on his concept of nouns. Neither do I spend much time trying to teach him distinctions between parts of speech, any more than I would want my doctor to be mainly concerned with the welfare of my appendix. I want the doctor to be zealous in matters most important for my health, and I should like to see teachers of Eng-

lish occupied with the essentials of expression, understanding, and appreciation. Modern study of language, I should say, has made it abundantly clear that the traditional parts of speech are not among these, and that the widespread attention to these vestigial remnants interferes with our main job of teaching young people how to think, how to enunciate the results of their thinking, and how to grasp the evidences of the thinking of others.

Defining Parts of Speech in English

SUMNER IVES

TO A PERSON whose habits of thought have been developed in the intellectual climate of Western culture, a division of the words in his vocabulary into the traditional eight parts of speech makes a kind of sense. These categories seem to have a kind of logical validity arising from the nature of human thought. And in Latin these "logical" categories are very nearly formal grammatical categories. A word, simply as an isolated, cited item in a list, can ordinarily be identified as a member of a grammatical category; that is, it has "part of speech" as an inherent and immediately recognizable grammatical property before it is used in a sentence. Even the most diverse category, the pronouns, are marked by a distinctive dative singular form or by a genitive singular with *-ius*. Prepositions and conjunctions have neither inflections nor special endings, but this fact sets them apart from other classes of words. Then, since prepositions combine rather freely with verbs to make other verbs, they are clearly a distinct category from conjunctions.

This is one of the characteristics of Latin as a language—one of the ways in which its grammar differs from that of English. One can cite an English word like *rule*, and nothing about the single

word itself shows whether it is a noun or a verb. As a verb, it can be a finite verb by itself or a part of a finite phrase which is introduced by a modal auxiliary, *shall*, *will*, *can*, or some other. Its form alone does not tell us fully its person, number, or mood. An equivalent Latin word, on the other hand, must be cited in a nearly specific grammatical form. Thus, *regula* is a noun, nominative singular; *regunt* is a verb, third person plural, present indicative. This basic difference between English and Latin makes the classification of words into parts of speech in one language something quite different from such a classification in the other.

If we use exactly the same list of categories for the words of English as are used for those of Latin, we get some groupings which work out very well, but we get others which include words about which the same general statements do not apply. For example, the grammatical properties of *very* differ considerably from those of *soon*, yet both are called adverbs in traditional grammar. English simply has a short list of words, one of which is *very*, which modify modifiers but never verbs. The inclusion of both *very* and *soon* in the same class ruins both the logical and the grammatical

validity of the category. Putting both *that* and *few* in the same class is just as bad.

If we classify the words of English by inflectional criteria, we get a list of parts of speech which is not particularly useful in a description of syntax. For one thing, the endings *-er* and *-est* are used with words that should, on a basis of their total properties, be divided into two classes, and they are not used with all members of these two classes. The inflections for plurality and the genitive case could mark another category, but it is doubtful that *empathy* and *indecisiveness*, which should go into this category, ever appear with these endings. The nearest correspondence there is between an inflectional distinction and a grammatically valid part of speech is the occurrence of *-ing* as a mark of verbs. But some words which are not verbs have this ending ("the listing is . . ."), and not all verbs do have it. Moreover, there is a great residue of English words which have different functions in the syntax but which have no inflectional peculiarities that serve to divide them into form-classes. One must accept a somewhat different concept of "part of speech"—as well as a different list of categories—if he is to use a classification of this general type for the vocabulary items of English.

Grammarians who have accepted, even as a temporary expedient, the eight Latin categories as appropriate to English, have tried solutions of three basic types. One type of solution is to regard the eight categories as logical categories and give definitions for them which are based on meaning. However, in addition to the fact that this classification is not fully satisfactory for English structure, no one has been able to word these definitions in a clear manner. Differentiation on this basis between prepositions and conjunctions has been especially difficult, yet their distinction is essential to a statement of English syntax.

But the most serious fault in this solu-

tion is the way it inhibits one's understanding of how languages work as symbolic systems. It implies a correlation between the structural forms of a particular language and the "laws of human thought" which simply does not exist. What appears to be a logical division, one that is true *ex natura*, may be a grammatical division which is found with greater or less clarity in the Indo-European languages (of which English is one) but which is quite foreign to the grammars of some other languages. For example, even a basic concept like "thingness" may include different natural phenomena in different languages. In some languages the symbol for "fist" is a verb; one "fists."

To a native speaker of English, a statement like "a noun is a name of a person, place, or thing" may be of some use, for he gets his idea of "thingness" from the grammatical structure of English. But if he studies another language, or tries to understand how languages work as symbolic systems representing meaning according to different "structurings" of meaning, he must learn that another language may ascribe "thingness" to different concepts. The statement is not a reliable correlation between language and logic; it is a circular pointing device, not a definition. This comment is likewise true for all the meaning-based, or "logical" definitions for such matters as case and tense. They may be represented by quite different grammatical devices in different languages, even within the Indo-European family. To try to settle arguments in philosophy or pedagogy by appeal to the grammatical structure of a language or to teach the forms of a language through "logical" categories is to misunderstand how languages work, and to pass this misunderstanding on to others.

A second common solution is to regard classification into parts of speech as entirely a matter of syntax. The parts of speech derived by this approach are not form-classes in the morphology; they are function-classes in the syntax. For ex-

ample, a single citation like *shelter* is simply an unclassified word. It becomes a noun in "under the shelter" and a verb in "shelter the horse." However, when using this approach, we find that the term noun may apply, at one time or another, to words with such diverse morphological and syntactic properties as *they*, *brave*, *whoever*, *enough*, *most*, *five*, *swimming*, and some others, and to constructions like "history teaching," "over the fence," and "whatever comes." We must recognize that some nouns (gerunds) may have a complement like verbs and that some (as in "the bravest will win") can be compared like adjectives. Our statements about the properties of elements in the various function-classes become extremely complex.

A more practicable solution is to keep "part of speech" on the word level and to use different types of definitions for the separate classes. Thus one can define nearly all verbs by their inflectional characteristics and conjunctions by how they join words and larger structures. If the properties which are selected as definitive are matters of form or of context, the eight categories can be isolated with reasonable clarity. This is essentially what has been done by L. M. Myers (*American English*) and Paul Roberts (*Understanding Grammar*). So long as the available textbooks on composition and communication and the books on grammar which are used in the lower grades retain the traditional classification, one should probably select one of the books recently published by these scholars and see that all prospective teachers of English understand it. This does not mean, however, that we should continue to accept this classification any longer than we must. It is not a fact of nature, or even of language, and it should be replaced as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, several people with training in descriptive linguistics are working on alternative classifications for the elements in English. Essentially they are

trying to do for English what was done for Greek, and later for Latin, hundreds of years ago. They are looking for ways to classify the linguistic items, on the various levels of complexity, so that better and more specific statements can be made about items as members of classes. This involves grouping them so that all the items in the same class will have a common, or nearly common, set of properties and so that there is some formal or contextual sign by which each member of the class can be identified. It may be possible to make more than one such classification for English; it may be necessary to make classifications on different structural levels. However, the only way to make one that is consistent with modern principles of language study is to rely wholly on the physical signs which are used in English—whether they appear in some other language, whether they have the same value in other languages, or whether the classification agrees with one made for another language are all quite irrelevant. The first problem, therefore, is the identification of the ways by which English grammatical categories are isolated—that is, the symbols in English which have grammatical significance.

The first step in doing this is the identification of all the phonetic values which serve to differentiate one linguistic item from another. In English these consist of at least two types of acoustic values. One type is called the segmental phonemes: vowels, semi-vowels, and consonants; the other type is called the suprasegmental phonemes: contrasting differences in relative pitch and relative stress. Something of the grammatical relevance of stress differences can be perceived by comparing different readings of "what are you waiting for?" One reading will mean "what do you expect?" The other reading will mean "why are you waiting?" The meanings are differentiated, in part, by the difference in stress on *for*. The relevance of pitch differences can be learned by pronouncing "that is a ladder"

in different ways to make the sequence of words into statements and questions with different over-all meanings. When analyzing the grammar of English, one must also consider the juncture features which separate elements on different levels of complexity. How relevant this is can be seen by reading the following aloud: "if the dog would tree the 'possum" and "if the dogwood tree would blossom."

The linguistic items which are differentiated by the phonemes are called morphemes. These are the basic linguistic elements to which some fragment of "message," or item of linguistic value, is attached. Grammar is the body of conventions according to which these morphemes are combined into larger structures. One must note that some of the morphemes are patterns of stress, contours of pitch, and types of juncture as well as sequences of vowels, semi-vowels, and consonants. Therefore, a grammar of English, to be exhaustive and definitive, must state the rules pertaining to stress, pitch, and juncture as well as those pertaining to morphemes made by the other type of phoneme, morphemes which we ordinarily call words or affixes. One must also realize that morphemes carry not only the kinds of meaning which are given in dictionary definitions but the grammatical meanings like "subject," "past tense," "infinitive," and so on. Thus, the stress pattern which makes *brick yard* (place where bricks are kept) a compound is a morpheme, and so is the *-ize* which makes the verb *civilize* from the adjective *civil*. George L. Trager and Henry Lee Smith, Jr., have done a great deal of research on the phonological elements in grammar, but much of their work has not been published.

Some descriptive linguists think that grammatical analysis should proceed as a matter of "pure" research, that a complete and tested description of English structure should be developed before serious attempts are made to get it into the academic program. There is much to be said for this view. However, the defects

of traditional grammar and the limits on its value as a prelude to composition have been so well publicized that the need for something better seems to be immediate. Progress is a matter of trying for limited objectives. Each advance becomes a point for a further advance. Each new proposal must be within the reach of the current teaching force; hence, changes can proceed no faster than the re-education of the teaching force. The rest of this discussion will be consistent with this program of limited objectives; it will not be an attempt at a final and definitive statement.

Before giving a tentative classification of the elements in English, I shall sketch the devices and patterns according to which these elements are made. Between the morpheme and the sentence, English has at least two structural levels. One is the word level. These are either combinations of morphemes or single morphemes. A morpheme which has the freedom of occurrence that a word has is called a free form; one that must be joined to a free form or to another which is not free is called a bound form. The bound forms which are most relevant to grammatical meaning are inflections, suffixes which indicate grammatical functions, and superfixes—stress morphemes which make compounds out of otherwise free forms. Thus, *landing-place*, *horse race*, *used to*, and *give out* (when meaning "distribute") are single words with superfixes, regardless of the spelling. A special type of element in English which is neither clearly a free form or a bound form is the marker, specifically the articles and the *to* which is the sign of the marked infinitive. Other elements can act as markers, but these other elements are free forms.

The basic structures in English are listed below. These are not all on the same level of analysis. An MH structure which is introduced by a noun marker can be the S in an SV structure or the C in a VC structure; a PH structure can be the M of an MH structure, and so on.

1. SV (subject-verb) structures.

2. VC (verb-complement) structures.
3. MH (modifier-head) structures.
4. HH (head-head) structures. These include coordinates like "ham and eggs" and "you and I" and appositions like "we men" and "the composer Bach."
5. PH (preposition-head) structures.
6. AV (auxiliary-verb) structures. These are the phrases which begin with some auxiliary verb or "phrase-making" verb like "keeps (on)" and end with a non-finite form of a full verb. "Is about to leave," "has been sleeping," etc.

The elements which are used in the making of sentences can be classified according to the types of bound morphemes in them, according to the inflections which can be added to them, according to the "normally" associated marker words, and/or according to the limitations on their use as constituents of the various structures.

As indicated earlier, the internal structure of English words, including their inflections, is not always definitive. The distinction between morphology and syntax which is clear in Latin does not appear on the same analytical level in English. The level in English which is most nearly congruent with the morphological level in Latin includes both the morphemic composition of words and their association with the markers. Something of how this works can be shown by comparison with French and German. When memorizing nouns of those languages, we learn the definite articles which go with them so as to remember their grammatical gender. English does not have grammatical gender as a regular characteristic of common nouns, but they are divided into three grammatically different sub-classes by their use with markers. Thus: *a cat*, *the water*, and *empathy* (no marker). Also, in a full classification of all the words, one needs to rely, to a limited extent, on the capacity of the words to enter specific lower level structures, the MH, PH, and AV. Thus, what is here called the "form-class" level in English is not truly a level

on which words are distinguished by their forms alone; it includes some part of what is traditionally called syntax.

Also, these "form-classes" of English, even when defined on a basis of the criteria suggested in the preceding paragraph, do not correlate consistently with specific uses in English sentences. For example, *brick* can be in "a red brick" or "a brick house"; *tall* can be in "a taller man" or "the tall will have to stoop." At least two descriptive procedures are possible. The grammarian can describe a pattern of "functional shifts." He can say that some nouns, e.g., *brick*, can act as an adjective; some adjectives, e.g., *tall*, can act as a noun. However, when doing this, he is using the same terms with different meanings and on different levels of the same analysis. This can be confusing in many ways.

An alternative solution is the use of two correlating sets of terms. Some descriptive linguists are already using correlating sets of terms, but they differentiate between the sets in a somewhat different way from that which is being suggested here. For the "form-class" level, the traditional terms may be used—re-defined and supplemented by a few others; for the "function-class" level, new terms can be made with an *-al* suffix. Thus, the "form-class" *adjective* correlates with the "function-class" *adjectival*. It seems to me that the use of these two correlating sets of terms, or classes, is methodologically better and that it permits a more efficient description of the syntax.

Now for the classification of English words into "form-classes."

This is a tentative classification made, so far as possible, on the representation of the language which appears in writing. However, even in an analysis based on this limited evidence, one must keep the supra-segmental features of the language in mind. When comparing two forms to see if they are in the same class, the total context in which they are being compared must be kept constant. One cannot change

the stress, pitch, or juncture characteristics of the context or the segmental characteristics. And words must be defined on a phonological basis. Thus, in "every once in a while," *every* is an adjectival modifying the nominal *once in a while*, which has an identifying superfix.

No attempt will be made to describe all the analytical steps which are preliminary to this classification, nor should one think that the statements are complete or that they are true definitions. Also, in making or using a classification, one should remember that some grammatical information is given in a variety of ways, sometimes simultaneously. There are various amounts of redundancy in the representation of grammatical meaning. Thus, in "they civilized the tribe," the second word is identifiable as to category by at least three signs: its position in respect to *they* and *the tribe*, the suffix *-ize*, and the inflection *-ed*. Also, a morpheme like *-ly* may indicate one thing when attached to one word and something different when attached to another, e.g., *manly* and *quickly*. The values of some grammatical signals are in part derived from the context and in part inherent.

A full analysis of English morphemes and words shows that there are a great many stem-forming suffixes. These can be divided into four groups. English has correlating sets of words like *legislate*, *legislation*, *legislative*, *legislatively*; *arrive*, *arrival*; *season*, *seasonal*; *hope*, *hopeful*, *hopefully*; *satire*, *satirize*, *satirical*, *satirically*; and so on. The facts that there are just four sets of these suffixes and that the words on which they appear can be divided into four groups with different syntactic properties makes these morphemes be part-of-speech indicators. They do not, of course, appear on all English words which have these syntactic properties. But they suggest that four is the right number of divisions and that these four classes constitute a single category on a different level of the analysis. This single category is congruent with what

C. C. Fries calls "open-class" words and with what Harold Whitehall and some earlier grammarians call "full" words. The four classes in the category are noun, verb, adjective, and adverb.

Nouns are indicated in English by one of the noun-indicator morphemes, by the possibility of inflections for plurality and the genitive case, and/or by a noun marker. The noun markers are the articles and the genitive case forms of pronouns or of other nouns. Of these identification signs, possibility of use with a prepositive genitive is probably the most nearly definitive. Proper nouns have a similar but not identical set of properties.

Verbs are indicated by one of the verb-indicator morphemes, by having at least three inflections, and/or by forming, with other verbs, AV structures.

Adjectives are indicated by one of the adjective-indicator morphemes, by the fact that they may come between a noun marker and a noun, and/or by the fact that they may appear with a prepositive intensifier. (Note: the second word in "the running boy" is not an adjective because it cannot be modified by *very*, a typical intensifier.)

Adverbs are indicated by one of the adverb-indicator morphemes, by the fact that they may be in sentence final position after a verb or a VC structure, and/or by the relative freedom with which they may be moved to specific places in the total clause. There are several subclasses of adverbs which are defined by the limitations on their freedom of movement. (Note that this eliminates two types of words from this category, those which behave like *very*, and those which behave like *almost*.)

Adjectives and adverbs have in common the property of taking the *-er* and *-est* suffixes or of making equivalent structures with prepositive *more* and *most*.

All these "form-classes" may appear as heads in MH structures.

Words which fall in the preceding categories include those words of the vocabu-

lary which have the greatest freedom of substitution in the general patterns of the syntax. That is, one member of a class can be substituted for another member of the class without destroying the grammatical integrity of the context, although the resulting expression may not be true by reference to experience. The trick to writing jabberwocky consists of substituting nonsense "words" for members of these classes. The rest of the vocabulary is divided into classes on a basis of syntactic properties, although pronouns do indeed have inflections. These classes are congruent with what Fries calls "closed-classes" and some other grammarians call "empty" words. They are primarily part of the grammatical machinery of English rather than part of its lexical symbolization.

Pronouns have three-case sets of forms and/or three-person sets of forms. They act as substitutes for some previously used nominal or as identifiers of the encoder (speaker) or decoder (hearer) in a message transfer. This class thus includes only the personal pronouns, the compound personal pronouns, and the reciprocal pronouns of traditional grammar.

Demonstratives include a short list of words which have no case forms but which may act as nominals or as adjectives. These are *that*, *those*, *this*, *these*, *such*, and *so*.

Indefinites do not have the case or person forms of pronouns nor do they require a specific antecedent. Their integrity as a class is indicated by the fact that they may be followed immediately by an *of* phrase, even when they are not preceded by an article. Compare: "some of the people" and "the apathy of these people." This class is not as homogeneous as some others, and some sub-divisions can be set up.

Intensifiers form MH structures with many adjectives and adverbs but never with nouns or verbs. The typical intensifier is *very*. (Note that *very* has an ad-

jective homonym—"the very man.")

Qualifiers form MH structures with at least one sub-class of adverbs (*home*, *here*, etc.), with adjectives like *ready*, and with many verbs. The typical qualifier is *almost*.

These two classes are, of course, placed with adverbs in traditional grammar, but their total lists of properties are such that it is best to consider them apart from adverbs and from each other.

Prepositions are parts of PH structures. These must have, as minimal forms, an initial preposition and a final nominal. The PH structure may, nevertheless, act as an adjectival or as an adverbial, whereas MH and HH structures must, as structures, act in the same functions as their heads.

Interrogatives are words which typically introduce questions which invite more than a "yes" or "no" response. There are two types of these: those which may be nominals or adjectives and those which may be neither.

Connectives join the basic types of structures. There are four types. Coordinating connectives consist of a list of seven: *and*, *but*, *or*, *nor*, *yet*, *for*, and *so*. These have somewhat different properties, but they have enough in common to be listed together.

Correlative connectives are those that operate as pairs, like *neither . . . nor*.

Subordinating connectives are those which introduce an SV structure which is part of another like or different structure. There are three types: those which introduce structures which may be moved; those which introduce structures that are fixed in post-positive position after a nominal or pronominal; and those which introduce structures that may be the S of an SV structure or the C of a VC structure.

Transitional connectives are those which typically join sentences into sequences of sentences. They usually, but not necessarily, stand between the structures they join.

Pattern words are those like *there* in "there are . . ." and *it* in "it is raining." They are used as fillers in normal structural patterns but have no referential or other grammatical value.

Markers are words which give an identification to some following word. The articles indicate and differentiate between nouns, and they sometimes indicate that a word from another "form-class" is being used as a nominal. The marker *to* indicates what is called a marked infinitive. Compare: "a run is necessary" with "to run is necessary."

Interjections are words which do not ordinarily combine with other words in the formation of structures. There are four types: those which call attention, either politely or abruptly; those which provide a carrier for a superfix or a continuation of noise while one is thinking; explosions like *ouch*; and profanity.

There is a considerable amount of overlapping in some of the categories. For example, some prepositions may be adverbials and some subordinating connectives may be prepositionals. In dealing with this situation, one can either decide arbitrarily to assign every orthographic

symbol to some "form-class" and treat other uses as "function-class" uses, or one can regard the orthographic symbols as homonyms and list the form in each "form-class" which is appropriate. It is probably best to treat a word like *since* as a member of the "form-class" subordinating connective and note that it can also act as a prepositional. On the other hand, words like *so* and *that* should probably be given multiple listing on the "form-class" level. Questions like this are best left to trial in the market-place.

It is obvious to the thoughtful reader that the criteria of identification which have been given do not give all the properties or the uses of the classes which have been listed. The only claims which are made for this classification are that it is based on characteristics within the structural patterns of English and that it provides a set of categories about which a great many more statements can be made than are possible if the traditional classification is used. That is, a more detailed syntax and a more useful rhetoric can be made with this classification than can possibly be made on a basis of traditional grammar.

A Syntactic Approach to Part-of-Speech Categories

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WHAT our school grammars and handbooks have to say about part-of-speech categories in modern English seems unsatisfactory to practically all specialists in English language now. In the present decade we have had new formulations avowedly representing decisive breaks with what has been taught as English grammar heretofore. The present paper outlines a less revolutionary formulation. It is assumed here that both the procedures and the conclusions of the standard grammarians of English have been essentially right, and that their ter-

minology is fairly usable. But it is also assumed that nothing is really worked out perfectly once and for all, and that constant effort to improve even the best formulations available is desirable for grammar as for other studies.

It is hard to see any real possibility of part-of-speech classifications based in phonology or in morphology. Differences in stress patterns within words and in vowel and consonant sounds accompany part-of-speech distinctions we will want to recognize in pairs such as *per*mit and *pér*mit, *sing* and *song*, *grieve* and *grief*.

Some noninflectional suffixes such as the *-ise* of *pasteurize* and the *-less* of *careless* correlate fairly well with part-of-speech classifications. The inflectional patterns followed by almost every verb correlate perfectly with part-of-speech classification: almost every verb has an *-s* form used (in the indicative present) when the subject is *he*, *she*, or *it*, and an *-ing* form used in phrasal progressives; and every word that has *-s* and *-ing* forms used in these ways is a verb. But criterions such as these do not carry us far enough. There are entirely too many words that cannot be classified on any of these bases. Examples are *fun*, *extinct*, *now*, *ouch*, *each*, and the *must* of *you must be tired*.

It is hard to see any real possibility of part-of-speech classifications based directly on the meaning expressed by the words which are to be classified. Ties with meaning are obviously the most important aspect of language. A schematically neat grammar would result if the grammarian could begin with categories of meaning: words applied to "things," places, and people are nouns; words applied to actions, events, and states of affairs are verbs; words applied to qualities are adjectives; and so on. But *death* is used of an event as truly as *die* is, and *honesty* and *honestly* are used of a "quality" as truly as *honest* is.

Our generally useful criterions are two purely syntactic ones: (1) syntactic functions characteristically performed, and (2) kinds of prepositive modifiers characteristically accepted. The second criterion requires us to describe the parts of speech in terms of complex interrelationships. The first requires that we work out an analysis of the structure of clauses and clause equivalents along with our description of parts-of-speech categories. We can do this. The key to our analysis is known words employed in known combinations. Our analysis will be "mentalist," not mechanist: we will not need to begin with accurate descriptions of vowel and consonant sounds, stresses, pitches, and

junctures in particular spoken versions of our examples. We need not hesitate to note both meanings and inflections where they seem to furnish useful supplementary criterions, but our basic criterions will be syntactic.

We had better begin by making a clear distinction between syntactic functions performed in particular sentences and part-of-speech classifications. When we say of the word *furniture* in *but, George, furniture is expensive now* that it is a subject, we say one thing about it; when we say that it is a noun, we say another. When we say of *expensive* that it is a complement, we say one thing; and when we say that it is an adjective, we say another. We can speak similarly of *is* as a predicator in function and a verb in part of speech.

Our list of major syntactic functions will have to include predicators, which we can regard as heads in their clauses; subjects, which we can regard as modifiers expressed or implied with all predicators and able to determine the form of many predicators (as when *go* becomes *goes* if the subject is *he*); complements, which we can regard as modifiers required by some predicators but not by others; and adjuncts, which we can regard as modifiers of predicators lying, in terms of layers, outside the clause nucleuses in which predicators, subjects, and complements are contained. *But, George, and now* can all be classified as adjuncts in the statement *but, George, furniture is expensive now*.

We will have to accept the reality of constant syntactic ellipsis. Thus when *Tuesday* is made a reply to *when did you see George?* the single word is a statement made up of an adjunct alone; as a reply to *what day is today?* the same word is a statement made up of a complement alone. What we can call isolates used in clause equivalents are another matter. *Ouch!* can be called an isolate given sentence status alone as a clause equivalent. In *good morning, George* the segment

good morning can be described as an isolate modified by the adjunct *George*: *good morning* looks like a reduction of a clausal sentence, but in contemporary use we cannot fill out a nucleus we feel confidence in.

We will need to recognize contained functions too, and collateral ones. In *good furniture is expensive* the subject is the segment *good furniture*: it is made up of a contained head and a contained modifier. If *George my boy* is added as an adjunct of direct address, we will have two other contained functions represented: that of principal (*George*) and that of appositive (*my boy*). If *at present* is added as an adjunct of time, two other functions are illustrated: that of preposition and that of object. If *here and elsewhere* is added as an adjunct of place, the function of co-ordinate within multiple segments is illustrated by *here* and *and elsewhere*. Our contained functions will be contained head and contained modifier, principal and appositive, preposition and object, and co-ordinate. A full treatment of syntactic functions within clauses and clause equivalents would give attention to several collateral functions performed only by words or segments which also perform basic or contained functions. Here we need note only one: that of clause marker. When we analyze subordinate clauses such as *when it's over* in *call me when it's over* and questions such as *what does George mean?* we will want to note that *when*, *what*, and *does* all function as clause markers besides functioning as *then*, *that*, and *does* function in *then it's over* and *George does mean that*.

We can describe the syntactic functioning of everything put into English in these terms. The unnormalized English of comfortable speech will often present problems; so will such unnormalized written English as the unpunctuated twenty-five-thousand-word reverie at the end of Joyce's *Ulysses*. Both the grammarian and the phonemicist tend to avoid unnormalized English. There is no possibility of

eliminating all problems in classification, just as there is no possibility of eliminating all ambiguity. But with our list of functions agreed on, we can go on to describe our part-of-speech categories. When we assign part-of-speech classification to a word, we should look beyond the sentence in which the word occurs and ask ourselves questions about the word's characteristic behavior when it expresses the meaning in point in other sentences too. In essence our part-of-speech classifications will be statements about characteristic syntactic functioning.

We can give first place to the verbs. These are the words which function characteristically as predicators. In statements they accept nominative or common-case forms of personal pronouns as their most distinctive prepositional modifiers—that is, as their subjects. All but a very few defectives (*can*, *may*, *must*, *ought*, *shall*, *should*, *will*) follow unmistakable patterns of inflection. We cannot refuse verb classification to the defectives: if we do, we will not be able to deal with the contrasts seen in *he must be French* and *he probably is French*.

We can give second place to the nouns. The syntactic function of greatest significance for the assignment of part-of-speech classification as a noun is that of subject. Almost all nouns are usable as subjects. Other functions that we can describe as nounal, meaning that they are most characteristically performed by nouns and nounlike pronouns, are those of complement of certain ("transitive") verbs and of object of prepositions. The most distinctive prepositional modifiers of nouns are adjectives, as in *pleasant houses*, and determiners such as articles and possessives, as in *a house* and *Jack's house*. The characteristic inflections of nouns are inflection for plural number and for possessive case.

But our category of nouns will contain three rather sharply distinct subcategories. There are the pluralizers, such as *house* and (in the plural only) *trousers*. Singu-

lar forms of pluralizers are rarely used alone as subjects in normalized modern English: *house is pleasant* simply will not do. There are the quantifiables, such as *furniture* and *milk* and *news* and *honesty* and *fun*. Quantifiables have no plurals, though it is true that many words have both quantifiable and pluralizer status—so that, for example, *too much fear* and *too many fears* exist side by side though *too much furniture* contrasts clearly with *too many chairs*. Finally, there are the proper nouns, such as *George* and *Mexico*. True proper nouns have no plurals, almost never take prepositive modifiers of determiner type, and take adjective modifiers (as in *poor George*) only in a very limited way. The effective meaning of the proper noun *George* in *George met us at the airport* is wholly individual, perhaps accumulated through many years of acquaintance; the *George of there are three Georges in the class* has become a pluralizer not wholly unlike the pluralizer *boys* in meaning, not a true proper noun. As for inflection for the possessive, on the one hand the use of the possessive is limited sharply in modern English, and on the other hand the inflection has become in effect a kind of postpositive equivalent of a preposition and attaches to words of varied types, as in *someone else's* turn and in such perhaps-nonstandard sequences as *the boy she goes with's car*. Finally, it must be noted that some words which are used in only one or two nounal ways require classification as functionally limited nouns. This is true, for example, of *behalf*, *sake*, and *stead*.

The adjectives will constitute a third part of speech. Our adjectives will be words which most characteristically perform the functions (1) of prepositive modifiers of nouns and (2) of complements of *be* with collateral relationships to the subjects of *be*. Thus *pleasant* is usable both as in *Jack's pleasant house* and as in *Jack's house is pleasant*. The most distinctive prepositive modifiers of adjectives are adverbs, as in *Jack's house is*

very pleasant and as in *Jack's manner was deceptively pleasant*. The only inflection objectives ever have is that for comparison, as when *old* becomes *older* and *oldest*. Not all adjectives inflect for comparison: *extinct*, for example, does not. Some words that are used in only one of the two characteristically adjectival functions will have to be classified as functionally limited adjectives. This is true of the *mere of a mere child*, the *lone of a lone child*, the *desirous of they were desirous of prolonging the negotiations*, and the *alive of the goldfish are still alive*.

We will need to recognize a category of adverbs as our fourth part of speech. The functions most characteristically performed will be (1) that of adjuncts to predicators, (2) that of prepositive modifiers of adjectives, other adverbs, and prepositional segments, (3) that of prepositions, and (4) that of postpositive contained modifiers. Though most nouns and adjectives are usable in all the characteristically nounal and adjectival ways, probably no adverb is used in all the characteristically adverbial ways. Thus *here* is most characteristically used as an adjunct as in *we're happy here*, and *very* is most characteristically used as a prepositive modifier of an adjective or another adverb, and *of* is characteristically used as a preposition, and *percent*, *o'clock*, and *galore* are characteristically used as postpositive contained modifiers as in *five percent* and *flowers galore*. *Here* is used as a complement in *he isn't here*, as a postpositive modifier in *the weather here is almost perfect*, and as object of a preposition in *I'm sure they'll start from here*; such words as *of* and *percent* are much more limited in use. The distinctive prepositive modifiers of adverbs are other adverbs, in which respect adverbs and adjectives are of course indistinguishable. A few words we will want to classify as adverbs form comparatives and superlatives with *-er* and *-est*: this is notably true of *often* and *soon*.

Several rather distinct subcategories of

adverbs should be noted. Adjective-like words in *-ly* form one: *badly, hardly, lately, merely, mistakenly, seemingly, gently, partly, and mostly* can serve as examples. Such words as *lonely* and *manly* must of course be classified as adjectives, not as adverbs. Adverbs in *-ly* function most characteristically as adjuncts, but they are also given frequent use as contained modifiers, as in *absolutely impossible, curiously silent, easily obtainable, numerically equal, practically there, desperately in love, and hardly anyone*. Clause-marker adverbs form a second subcategory. Except for *that* and such words as *before* and *since*, the words which are called subordinating conjunctions in the school grammars and handbooks can more conveniently be classified as adverbs which commonly perform both basic or contained syntactic functions and also collateral clause-marker functions. Thus in *can you tell me where the post-office is?* the word *where* can be said to function both as the complement in the subordinate clause, exactly as *there* does in *the post-office is there*, and as a clause marker. *Where* obviously functions quite similarly in the main question *where is the postoffice?* In *I'll go if I can* the word *if* can be said to function both as an adjunct in its clause, as *perhaps* does in the statement *perhaps I can*, and as a clause marker. The four coordinators *and, but, or, and nor* can be said to constitute a third subcategory among the adverbs: we will not need a part-of-speech category called "conjunctions." Simple conjunctive adverbs such as *also, therefore, yet, nevertheless, and else* perhaps deserve a subcategory of their own among the adverbs. Prepositional adverbs certainly deserve a subcategory. There are two reasons for not letting them stand as a separate part of speech. First, the terms *preposition* and *object* are useful as names of companion functions, and function and part of speech must be distinguished. Second, the behavior of the words which function as prepositions makes it simplest to regard

them as transitive adverbs. There is no more reason to assign the *in* of *the Dean isn't in his office* to a different part-of-speech category from that of the *in* of *the Dean isn't in than there is to assign the play of *Helen doesn't play bridge* to a different part-of-speech category from that of the play of *Helen doesn't play*. Nor is there any reason to assign *before* to different part-of-speech categories on the basis of its uses in *he'd been there before*, in *he'd been there before that*, and in *he got there before we did* (where the prepositional adverb *before* has a clausal object). Other adverbs of miscellaneous types remain. *Rather, quite, soon, doubtless* (in syntax quite unlike *fearless*, for example), *well, sometime, anyhow, now, twice, seldom, anew, apiece, and ago* show something of the variety that exists. *Ago* even has nouns and nounal segments as its characteristic prepositive modifiers, as in *years ago*. Our adverb category is an exceptionally miscellaneous one, but it would be hard to break it up into smaller categories that were both well unified in syntax and reasonably large in size.*

We will need a fifth part-of-speech category for the words which most characteristically function as isolates, with the syntactic value of whole nuclei. We can call these words absolutes. They will include such "interjections" of the school grammars as *ouch, wow, zowie, and hello*, and the substitute words *yes* and *no*. Many isolates are not absolutes. Thus the emotional clause equivalents *gracious! well!* and *my!* have isolates as their sole components, but in terms of part-of-speech classifications these words are best regarded as adjective, adverb, and pronoun respectively.

Finally, we had better recognize the pronouns as a sixth part of speech distinct from the other five (though not from such subcategories as the coordinating adverbs) in that it is closed. It will be both desirable and relatively easy to list the words to be placed in the category of the pronouns. The words for which such classi-

fication seems desirable are of two kinds, which can be called determinative and nounal.

Determinative pronouns include, first of all, the full determinatives of identification: *this, that, the, a, some, any, either, every, each, no, neither, what, which, whatever, whichever*. These are the words which, along with possessives and the numeral *one*, can determine the singular forms of pluralizer nouns and so produce units which are usable as subjects, as undetermined singular pluralizers usually are not. "*A house* is being built across the street." "*Which house* is the larger?" Some full determinatives of identification can modify plurals and quantifiables, some cannot. Partial determinatives of identification will require recognition too: *same* and *selfsame, such, other*, the ordinal numerals, *last, next, former, latter, own*. *Last* and *next* are sometimes full determinatives, as in *next week will be very busy*. Determinatives of number and quantity will include the cardinal numerals, *few, little, several, enough, many, much* and *overmuch, all, and both*. Determinatives of number and quantity are characteristically used to modify (1) plural forms of pluralizer nouns and (2) quantifiable nouns. Except for the cardinal numeral *one*, they modify singular forms of pluralizers only very exceptionally. *Some, any, and no* often pattern as determinatives of number and quantity, it should be said; and there is a frequent mixing of interest in identification with interest in quantity and number.

The most characteristic use of determinative pronouns of all three types is the use as determiners with noun heads. But almost all determinative pronouns are also usable rather freely in nounal functions. In nounal uses they are best regarded as what we can call accretional forms, having assimilated both the meanings and the functions of what would be their heads in non-elliptical construction. "Most tourists are interested in the life of the people, but *some* are interested only in night-

clubs." "*Three* of the students are from Japan." Here *some* has the value of *some tourists* and *three* has the value of *three students*, which is undesirably complete before *of the students*. Sometimes no very precise unstated head is really thought of when determinative pronouns are used like nouns. "*This* is my friend Jack Har-rar." "*She's* on her *own* now." Nevertheless it remains true that such determinatives as *this* and *own* are syntactically unlike both such words as *he* and the adjectives. Among the determinative pronouns only *the, a, and every* do not occur in accretional nounal uses. *No* has a long variant *none* in accretional uses, and *other* has an *-s* plural in accretional uses. "The work requires patience, and I have *none*." "Some old friends write oftener than *others*." Such numerals as *hundred* have *-s* plurals used in curiously limited ways. *This* and *that* show plural number in both determiner uses and accretional nounal ones. *Few, little, much, and many* compare, like many adjectives and a few adverbs; *much* and *many* have their comparative and superlative forms in common.

The nounal pronouns can be listed as follows:

1. The personals *I, you, he, she, it, we, they*.
2. The reciprocal *each other*.
3. The expletive *there*.
4. General *one* ("a person").
5. Substitute *one* (as in a *new car and an old one*).
6. The compounds in *-one, -body, and -thing*.
7. The clause markers *that, who, and whoever*.

In general, the nounal pronouns are not distinguishable from the nouns in syntactic functions characteristically performed. Expletive *there* is of course quite limited in syntactic functioning, but so is such a noun as *behalf*. Except for substitute *one*, the nounal pronouns are rarely modified by prepositive adjectives or determiners. In this respect they are like the proper nouns, and exceptional *dear me* is comparable to exceptional *poor George*.

In the matter of inflections the nounal pronouns behave quite individually. Some do not inflect. Others, notably the personals, have remarkably complex inflections. *I*, for example, has a nominative and an objective, two possessives (*my* and *mine*, syntactically a pair like *no* and *none*), and the compounded form *myself*. It is more like the nouns: it has only a common-case form, one possessive, and the compounded form *itself*. In complexity (and archaism) of inflection *I* is to *boy* and *sheep* somewhat as *be* is to *play* and *put*. (For syntax, "inflected" forms need not be etymologically related: *went* is now an inflected form of *go*, not of *wend*.) It is noteworthy, incidentally, that an *-s* plural turns up in substitute *one*. The *-s* plurals of such compounds as the pronoun *ourselves* and the adverb *indoors* really belong to the noun components within the compounds.

The nounal pronouns do have enough in common with the determinatives to warrant putting them in the same part-of-speech category as the determinatives. *Who's he?* is syntactically more like *who's that man?* than like *who's that?* since *he* always has the value of determinative and head together; but the element of identification in terms of situation or context is very strong indeed in *he*. In such compounds as *something* the determinative element is even more obvious. Even substitute *one* still deals with identification in terms of situation or context. It seems wise to keep a small closed category of pronouns and to include both the words which normally function as determiner modifiers of nouns and the words here listed as nounal pronouns.

Our part-of-speech categories, then, include verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, absolutes, and pronouns. Some words will require classification now in one part of speech, now in another. A word which accepts distinctive modifiers of two different types will require two classifications. Thus *conservative* is an adjective in *he is very conservative* and in *they are very*

conservative, but a noun in *he is a true conservative* and in *they are true conservatives*. Where sharp distinctions in meaning correlate with significant distinctions in syntactic function, two classifications seem desirable. Thus *little* is a pronoun in *a little fun*, where an indefinite article which cannot modify quantifiable *fun* modifies it, and an adjective in *a little boy*, where it is a size word like *small*. *There* is an adverb in *there it is* but a pronoun in *there isn't time*. *Still* is an adjective in *the still figure* but an adverb in *I still like it*. *Pretty* is an adjective in *pretty girls* but an adverb in *pretty bad*. Some words require several part-of-speech classifications: *round* is an example.

Performance of untypical functions must not be regarded as in itself a basis for multiple part-of-speech classifications. *Hours* is a noun in *hours later*. *Toy* is a noun in *toy cupboard*, meaning a cupboard for toys, and also in *toy cupboard*, meaning a cupboard which is itself a toy. *Long* is an adjective in *he hasn't lived here long*, in *that happened long ago*, and in *he'll be back before long*. *Hard* is an adjective in *he works hard*. *Easy* is an adjective in *easy does it* and in *take it easy*. *Recently* is an adverb in *until recently*. *Yes* is an absolute in *a yes man*. *No* is a pronoun in *no better*, and *much* in *much worse* and in *I didn't like it much*. The *poor* of *the poor suffered most* and the *know* of *he's in the know* present special problems, since they have articles modifying them as determiners just as articles modify nouns. But *poor* is usable in this nounal fashion only when it has plural force, and neither *poor* nor *know* accepts other determiners, or adjectives, freely. We had better call *poor* an adjective and *know* a verb even when they are used with determiner *the*.

Inflected forms should be classified with their basic forms as much as possible. Thus though possessives function much more like determinative pronouns than like their own common-case forms, they should be classified with their common-case

forms. But many words of gerundial and participial origin require noun and adjective classifications in some of their uses. Thus *singing* had better be called a noun when adjectives and/or determiners precede it or could easily be placed before it. In *window washing is exciting up here* the word *washing* had better be called a noun, since *window washing* is not clausal in structure. In *washing windows is exciting up here*, the same word had better be called a verb form functioning as predicator in a gerundial clause without expressed subject but with implied general subject. In *Spanish-speaking students* the word *speaking* is best called an adjective; in *they ended the year speaking Spanish*

it had better be called a verb form functioning as predicator in a clause whose subject is suggested by the main subject.

Simple definitions of the names of the parts of speech can obviously be useful. Those which we all learned from the school grammars and handbooks have now been demolished, and we have nothing to take their place. Perhaps, as Jespersen thought, we cannot make simple definitions which are also accurate, just as we cannot make a simple definition of the word *dog* which is also accurate. But we can formulate fairly compact statements of the characteristic syntactic behavior of our verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, absolutes, and pronouns.

The Failure of Robert Penn Warren

NORMAN KELVIN

IN THAT speculative and suggestive study, *The Mind of the South* (1941), W. J. Cash writes of a contradiction which beset Southerners during the nineteenth century. Speaking of the advance among them of religious and other movements and ideas, he says that "the triumph of the Evangelical sects . . . involved the triumph of the Puritan ideal" but that the victorious struggle for its establishment was carried on "coincidentally with the growth of that curious Southern hedonism which was its antithesis." Cash does not believe that Puritanism and hedonism ever met, during the nineteenth century, in "open and decisive conflict," but neither does he say that the issue was finally resolved. Nor could he, for today these antithetical traditions of thought, feeling, and conduct are in stronger opposition to each other than ever they were in the past. Moreover, the conflict between them is no longer confined to the South but has thrust itself upon the nation at large and has given

rise everywhere to confusion of values and agony of spirit.

Because the contention between Puritanism and hedonism has now become a national problem, Southern writers, for whom this perplexing matter is a heritage, have much to say to the rest of us, and their knowingness is a reason for their eminence today. And among Southern writers none is more articulately concerned with ideas, none has been more deeply disturbed by the antinomial claims of Puritanism and hedonism, than Robert Penn Warren. Though he has not said explicitly that he has been caught up in the struggle between these opposing philosophies, he has allowed their antithetical pulls to shape his approach to the theme he has acknowledged as his own—the meaning and nature of evil—and if we can discover how this has happened, we will be in a fair way to understand how one writer, at least, has been influenced by the dilemma and how he has tried to resolve it.

A more elaborate and precise way of describing Warren's theme would be to say that he has reiterated his belief that man's quest for something grand and pure, be it honor, justice, virtue, or love, will necessarily suffer betrayal by the evil in human nature. A concern with evil does not of course distinguish Warren from the many writers who have today rediscovered its existence, forced as they have been by the continuing history of moral outrage to give up their pure faith in the power of rationalism to make people good. But Warren differs from many contemporary thinkers, from those at least who have not lost their faith in humanism, in his sense of what evil is.

Most humanists see evil as the gap between moral aspiration and moral capability, as the feeling of being limited which that gap creates. With this picture they have generated the hope that the power of evil can be reduced, for if capability can be enlarged and made to approach aspiration—and humanists believe this to be possible—a sense of moral progress and relative increase in the power of goodness will be the spiritual results. Another consequence of this view, and a most important one, is that it dislodges evil from that central position in the scheme of human motives which it had held for so long. Until recently, however, Warren consistently rejected this view and its beneficent consequences, and in order to explain why his characters were destroyed, found it necessary to restore evil to its dominant power and dark glory.

To see the connection between Warren's disagreement with the humanists and the current conflict between our Puritan and hedonist aspirations, we must remind ourselves that Puritanism has traditionally believed pleasure to be the lure through which evil beguiles us into destroying ourselves. Hedonism, on the other hand, sees no difficulty in identifying pleasure-seeking with our desire to be good as well as happy. Thus, it is no accident that humanists have adopted the hedonistic creed

as their own; as a philosophy suggesting a method through which the magnitude of evil in the world can be reduced. It is also not a matter of chance that Warren, who, until he wrote *Band of Angels* (1955) unequivocally charged our most pleasurable pursuits—the quest for honor, virtue, justice, or love—with being the decoys of evil, should have taken his stand on the Puritan side of the controversy. This is a dubious commitment for a writer to make when approaching a real cultural dilemma, and a close examination of Warren's writing will reveal that he paid a heavy price for his choice.

Warren's first serious work of any length was a biography of John Brown (1929). The thesis of the book is that Brown was a negative force; that he was guilty of the worst sin of all—pride. Recounting the last days of Brown's life, the days Brown spent in prison awaiting execution, Warren says that he

recognized the situation as inevitable and necessary, for all of this, he said again and again, had been determined before the world began. His will and God's will were one, and that astounding egotism had discovered the last and absolute terms of its expression. He had rejected the world and gained it in that rejection.

When we piece this paragraph together with the pages preceding it in the book—the pages whose theme is that Brown ought to be remembered chiefly as a thief and murderer—the judgment toward which Warren has been leading us becomes clear. He wants us to believe that the "world" Brown gained was, or should be, undying infamy, and that Brown's execution was the just retribution he received for identifying his own evil will with God's will.

Warren's is surely an odd way to write biography. Biography is history, and although history is always a critical interpretation of data, it behooves the historian to consider all the significant material at his disposal before arriving at conclusions. But Warren, in pushing his thesis,

ignored Brown's role in history as a man who fought slavery; whose actions, seen from the perspective of today, form part of the larger movement of events leading toward the Emancipation Proclamation. Merely because these are commonplaces to be read in any schoolboy's textbook does not give anyone the right to ignore their significance. Warren, of course, had his reasons for denying half the truth; he wanted us to see Brown's career as a solo drama enacted in isolation from American political history, for only if we are willing to do so can Warren hope to make us believe that the key to an understanding of Brown is that he was motivated by an evil impulse. That we are not convinced, and marvel rather at the use of a mode of historiography which has been in discard for a hundred and fifty years, is, on the one hand, proof that we recognize how Warren has suppressed his historical imagination in order the more easily to deliver a Puritan judgment, and, on the other, reason for us to wonder how he could ever hope to serve knowledge through such means.

Perhaps Warren felt uneasy in the role of historian, and perhaps that is why he turned to the novel, believing it a form in which an author's sympathies could not be challenged upon grounds of narrowness. If so, he was in grave error, for the novel, besides making its own peculiar demands, requires of a writer precisely that breadth and freedom of vision which distinguish a true historian. Warren's restricted and Puritan view of humanity, his inability to see man as other than an isolated being in a treacherous universe, prevented him for years from writing a novel that was morally imaginative, just as it hindered him in his effort to be a biographer. And, as might have been expected, when he finally did begin—in his most recent work—to liberate himself, his envisioning powers proved awkward from years of constricted use and he was still prevented from creating a coherent story: a story whose events would contain within

themselves the conditions for the final moral revelation.

His troubles began with his first novel, *Night Rider* (1939). The opening situation is promising, for it shows us a man who recognizes the impossibility of isolation, who is faced with the need to make decisions and knows that his choices will determine the moral character of his relations with other men, as well as his moral sense of himself.

Here is the beginning of true tragedy, of a story whose strength could lie in its inevitability. To an extent Warren does not fail. In the events relating to Percy Munn's career as a *Night Rider*, Warren shows him using courage and imagination and, because of consequences of his decision to join a clandestine group, consequences beyond his control, still being forced to his doom. But there is another story in the novel, the story of Percy's alienation from his wife, whom he wants to divorce, and of his affair with Lucy Christian, whom he wants to marry. In writing about these matters Warren stumbled into a dark wood from which he never emerged. He seems to tell us that the unreasonable death which overtakes Percy as a consequence of his joining the *Night Riders* is somehow the corollary of the unreasonable failure he suffers in his love for his wife and later, for Lucy. Yet, actually, as the story is written, there is no relationship at all between Percy's doom in the public world and his fate in love. With respect to the *Night Riders*, Percy dies because life is like that, and this is true tragedy. With respect to the women, he fails not because he fell in love and then became the victim of unforeseeable consequences, but because he never was in love with either of them. Warren does not really see this: he wants us to believe that Percy found love and then lost it because of forces beyond his control; yet no one can read the dialogues between Percy and his wife or the later descriptions of the mechanical embraces between him and Lucy and believe that

any passion, or tenderness, or realized depth of feeling was ever there to be endangered. The atmosphere of *Night Rider* can only be described as barren, and while this fact about what is after all Warren's first novel is not in itself important, it does become significant when we realize that the same emptiness pervades his subsequent works and spawns, there, his sense of man's inability to act in the world.

Much of the tone of the later novels is exacerbated irony. It is not the irony of a novelist who has lost all his illusions but gained in the process a veiled compassion for frail and foolish mankind. It is the tone, rather, of a man, still suffering from the shock of his disappointments, who has convinced himself he has recovered, but who is, in reality, trying to outface a cruel world by naming it traitor before it betrays him. It is the tone, in short, of a pessimist who knows that plain pessimism will not support life in a novel and so fortifies it with a mock, dry humor which says in effect, "We're all in hell, but we do look funny down here, don't we?"

Certainly, in the title of Warren's next work, *At Heaven's Gate* (1943), there is a kind of grim joke. The story takes place in an earthly limbo, or perhaps it is hell itself, and heaven has less to do with this novel than with any other Warren has written. The mechanism of *At Heaven's Gate* is psychological determinism, and the people in the story are automata, sporadically jerking in reaction to parental influence.

Because its ending is determined by Slim Sarrett's behavior, *At Heaven's Gate* succeeds in being that rarest of all things, an amoral novel, which is to say, hardly a novel at all, for a story whose outcome is controlled by a madman can neither be a drama nor have moral meaning. Drama results from the efforts of characters to understand themselves or to free themselves from the oppression of nature or of other men. Moral meaning results from the insights they gain while making the choices forced upon them in their struggle

for understanding or freedom. When Slim murders Sue he is capable of neither rational effort nor conscious choice, and Warren, in choosing to make the meaning of the story turn on Slim's act, betrayed his indifference to the relation between choice and morality. He came marvellously close, in this amoral novel, to the extreme Calvinist position which sees man so at the mercy of an unaccountable Divine Will as to make puny and pathetic his hope that he ever can be capable of right choices in life.

If there was any doubt that this was Warren's view, *All the King's Men* (1946), which followed *At Heaven's Gate*, eliminated it. *All the King's Men* is the story of Willy Stark, a ruthless, ambitious blackmailer. Willy is also a naive idealist: he wants personal power, but as governor of the State he also wants to do good for the people. In many ways Willy is a hedonist, a man of our century, a leader who has cut himself loose from traditional guides to conduct and who believes he can reform society into any shape he deems best. But Willy is not as autonomous as he regards himself: he is controlled by a peculiar view of Calvinist theory, by a belief that the raw materials of human nature are invariably corrupt and that a social builder must therefore fashion goodness out of badness, the only material available. As a consequence, Willy relies on blackmail as his chief instrument for directing public affairs toward his beneficent ends. Blackmail cannot fail to work, for as he tells Jack Burden, his private secretary and the first-person narrator of the story, "Man is born in the stink of the didie and he passes to the stench of the shroud," and "there is always something"—something corrupt to be found in the history of the most apparently upright of citizens. Willy also feels there can be no moral censure of his methods, for if evil is all there is, blackmail is merely the most efficient instrument available for working evil into good. In short, Willy, although a man of many good impulses, has made

the enormous error of thinking it is all right to exploit people for the sake of an attractive social goal. Thus, Willy Stark, like Percy Munn, has the makings of a tragic figure. Once again, however, Warren loses control of his story, and the conclusion to *All the King's Men* unfortunately ignores its own beginnings.

To understand why this is so, we must briefly review what has happened in the story. Willy, after having destroyed other men in his zeal to create a magnificent social order which would be his monument, was shot down by Adam Stanton, who was a brilliant surgeon, the director of the Willy Stark Memorial Hospital, and the brother of Ann Stanton, lately in love with Willy. Adam's action, which had in it something of the madness which caused Slim to garrot Sue Murdock, was touched off when an informant told him that Ann was sharing Willy's bed and that Adam's own appointment as director of the hospital had merely been a move on Willy's part to get closer to Ann. The second half of this tale was untrue.

Because Adam is the man who brings Willy down, the conflicting and opposing forces in the novel ought to have been caught up in these two men, and Warren, through his narrator, Jack Burden, asks us to believe that such was the case. Yet when we look again at Adam Stanton to see just why he was chosen to stand against Willy, we get the uncomfortable feeling that something has gone amiss. Willy's crime, after all, was ruthlessness toward his political opponents, and however reprehensible it is that Willy, a married man, has fallen in love with Ann Stanton, there is nothing in the part of the novel leading up to his murder—the major part—to suggest that Warren wanted us to consider Willy's affairs with women the great evils in his career. What seems to have happened is that Warren, after laboring long and successfully to create a story about political morality, suddenly swept away the edifice he had been carefully building and substituted a

new story, one concerning the outraged sensibilities of an inflexible doctor whose sister had engaged in illicit love—a doctor who had very little to do with the politics in the previous story.

It is therefore amazing to hear Jack Burden say that Adam and Willy *had* to be instruments of each other's death (Adam was killed by one of Willy's henchmen); to hear him say that together they represented the "tragic separation of our times"—the separation of the man of ideas from the man of facts. This may be the tragedy of our times, but it has nothing to do with Willy and Adam as Robert Penn Warren created them. The Willy Stark we met in the novel was as much a man of ideas as was the puritanical, compulsive Dr. Stanton. They merely held to *different* ideas, and while some of Willy's were outrageous, so were some of Adam's. If Willy had an immoral idea in thinking there is only bad in the world, Adam had an equally wrong and wicked one in thinking that all the corruption in the State was concentrated in rising riff-raff like Willy and that there was none in old Southern gentlemen like Adam's father. On the other hand, both Willy and Adam had moral, or good, ideas. Willy believed in the efficacy of political action to relieve a part of human suffering, and Adam believed in the reality of integrity and personal honor.

Thus, what Warren calls the "tragic separation" between Willy and Adam has nothing really to do with the opposition of "facts" to "ideas." The real separation, the one which exists in the novel, is between a man of political action and an aloof, isolated patrician. What Warren has told us is that he believes the life of action to be irreconcilable with the maintenance of integrity and personal honor, that human action necessarily allows the triumph of the evil inherent in man. He has, by electing Adam Stanton to be Willy's judge and executioner—Adam Stanton instead of some politically more significant figure like Hugh Miller, the de-

cent attorney-general—condemned Willy not for being a man of facts but for being a man who believed in ideas which lead to action.

Would it not have been more to the point in a novel about political morality to begin with a belief in the validity of ideas which lead to action (what else should a politician believe in?) and then to show that there are moral and immoral ideas of this kind and that Willy's are immoral because they encourage a violation of human dignity? Such a procedure would have allowed Warren to make Hugh Miller, who has as much integrity as Adam Stanton but who, unlike Adam, believes moral government can help people to the good life, the meaningful opposition to Willy. Although, as *All the King's Men* is written, Hugh is relegated to a minor role, it is significant that Jack Burden, after Willy's death, announces he will return to politics and that this time he will serve Hugh Miller. But Jack tells us his resolve at the very end of the novel, so a story about Hugh and what he stands for is really a sequel to *All the King's Men*, not part of it. Unfortunately, Warren has not yet seen fit to write that sequel.

He chose, instead, in his next novel, *World Enough and Time* (1950), to go back to the early nineteenth century, to the Kentucky frontier, and to wrestle there, unencumbered by twentieth-century advice, with the problem of pride and loneliness.

Jeremiah Beaumont, whose story this is, is a man in search of honor and glory. He is also a man who is not sure his wife loves him. There are echoes here of *Night Rider*, but Warren tried more strenuously to unite the two areas of Jeremiah's life than he did Percy Munn's. Nevertheless, Jeremiah is in many ways an even less convincing characterization than was Percy. His pursuit of revenge for his wife's sake is carried on in spite of her having willingly taken Col. Fort as her lover and in spite of her ultimately asking him not to kill Fort. Jeremiah is therefore not really a

nineteenth-century man of honor, a protector of women, but is rather a husband of any age fearful that his wife still loves a man to whom she had once given herself.

These are the early conditions of the story, and much as the later events in *All the King's Men* seem separated from the first, the concluding developments in *World Enough and Time* stand in no true relation to the novel's beginning. Warren presses us to believe that Jeremiah is pursuing honor in a transcendental realm of awareness into which the particulars of his marriage do not enter. Thus, as Jeremiah works himself up into an unconvincing passion to go through with the murder of Col. Fort, Warren allows Rachel's role as the cause of this pathetic behavior to dwindle, and he exhibits Jeremiah in the posture of a man agonizing over abstract notions of right and wrong. And when finally the murder has been committed, Warren puts all his own intellectual machinery into motion to keep Jeremiah away from the truth; to keep him searching for an understanding of himself without ever again examining the effect Rachel has had upon him.

In the end, Warren insists that Jeremiah's tragedy resulted from his adherence to ideas; that it resulted, in other words, from a cause similar to the one which brought about Adam Stanton's fate. But in *World Enough and Time* Warren explicitly commits the error which he made in an obscurer manner in *All the King's Men*: he suggests that Jeremiah's tragedy was a necessary one since superior men must and will live by "ideas." Once again Warren has spoken of ideas as if they were all of a piece; as if there were no distinction between those which further and enhance life, and those which deny and destroy it. After having Jeremiah acknowledge he had been wrong when he "had thought that the idea in and of itself would redeem the world and in that thought had scorned the world," Warren causes him to surpass himself in bad reasoning by making him declare that his

mistake led "to a second *error* [italics mine] which must always follow from the first when we find that the idea has not redeemed the world: the world must redeem the idea." Why this also is an error—equal to the first—is a question which Warren then allows Jeremiah to juggle but never answer as he stumbles and staggers into the lethal embrace of beckoning loneliness.

He cannot answer it, because the only answer is that this second belief, unlike the first, was not an error at all. To say that it was is to create a false, impossible antagonism between the life of mind and the life of action. The truth, the compelling truth, is that the world does redeem some ideas and doesn't others, and while we cannot predict which it will so favor, we can be certain that it will deny redemption to Jeremiah's desperate notions about honor just as surely as it denied tolerance to Willy Stark's dismal theory of justifiable blackmail. About Willy's ideas enough has been said; about Jeremiah's it is worth noticing that besides being grounded in fear they lead to a glamorization of stiff pride and isolation, and it is hardly to be expected that the world will nourish the man who has retired from it.

At the novel's end, Jeremiah, reviewing the wreckage of his life, cries out: "I had longed for some nobility—to do justice in the world and what was worthy of praise . . . and in my crime and vainglory of self is there no worth lost? Oh, was I worth nothing in my agony? Was all for nought?" We read this cry and we want to respond compassionately, but then we remember what occurred in the story and we know we can say only, Yes, all was for nought, for all was done in self-deception, in a proud and terrified flight from humiliation. We remember this and we know that once again we must reject a conclusion Warren is asking us to accept—in this case, that Jeremiah's destructive pride, like John Brown's, was a necessary and unavoidable expression of the evil

within him. We know there are limitations to human understanding, limitations inherently tragic, but we also know that utter blindness to the truth about oneself results from fear, and that fear never need reign as imperiously as it did in the life of Jeremiah Beaumont.

In *Brother to Dragons* (1953), a dramatic poem and the major work to follow, there seems to be an admission that an adequate answer to Jeremiah cannot be grounded in the false assumption that destructive pride is a necessary force in human conduct. Warren, in seeking a way to eliminate this pride, at last brings into the open the problem which had been the obscured but beating heart of so much of his previous work, the problem of love.

Nevertheless, further disappointment waits for us. Warren's manner of dealing with love is to subject it to a devastating analysis, as if to punish it for having betrayed so many of his characters, as if to demonstrate that in truth love is a greater source of misery, anguish, and evil than the lack of it ever was for all the lonely men he created in his novels. This conclusion is, in effect, Warren's curious reaction to his discovery that hurtful pride and most other forms of evil in the self are expressions, under certain conditions, of the need to love and be loved. But it is a conclusion which leads to an incredible solution to the problem out of which it arose, for Warren goes on to say, in effect, that if misery and evil stem from the problems of love, and if misery and evil are things we wish to eliminate, what we must do is rid ourselves of love, and do so by proving love is not what we would like to think it is but is rather a mask and a deception.

Thus, Thomas Jefferson, one of the principal speakers in the poem, declares: I have long since come to the firm considered conclusion
That love, all love, all kinds, descriptions,
and shapes,
Is but a mask to hide the brute face of fact,
And that fact is but the immitigable ferocity of self. . . .

And having described our love, he tells us a moment later what reward we can expect for it:

We must always be betrayed by the most dear. . . .

Such betrayal serves justice, for the beloved Knows always the precise nature of our love,

Knows what it is, and therefore would be avenged.

If this were true, the human race, like the lemmings, would long since have marched itself into the seas. It is not true. Hate attempting to pass for love—not love itself—is the mask of ferocious self and the target of retaliation. Warren, however, who appears in the poem in his own person, never takes issue with Jefferson's spurious account of love. Rather, he accepts it and uses it to generate the pall of horror which hangs over his story. He uses it to explain why Lilburn Lewis butchers the Negro slave, George. Lilburn's orgy of savage violence, Warren tells us, had its origin in his love for his dead mother and in the distrust and hatred he feels for his wife. Finally, Warren relates both Lilburn's strangled sense of love and his desire to commit maniacal deeds to his yearning for glory, and adds that we, all of us, are Lilburn, for we, too,

have lifted the meataxe in the elation of love and justice. . . .

We have yearned in the heart for some identification

With the glory of the human effort, and have yearned

For an adequate definition of that glory. To make the definition would be, in itself, Of the nature of glory. This is not paradox. It is not paradox, but the best hope.

In recognizing our need to make an adequate definition of glory, Warren reached another crisis in his search for an understanding of the human situation. However, as happened so often in the past, he failed to emerge from the crisis with a clearer vision, for once more the nightmare face of evil arose to blind him and to send him

stumbling into those thickets of self-reproach among which no path to hope will ever be found. He says, "We have lain on the bed and devised evil in the heart," and he urges us to see this as the truth, for, he declares, that recognition "is the death of vanity, and that is the beginning of virtue."

Surely, not so. Vanity, the distorted sense of self-importance, will not be lessened by the conviction that one harbors terrible evil in his heart. It will rather be increased by this belief, for the horrified feeling of having committed enormous crimes in life creates the illusion of having been singled out, in the drama of good and evil, for the villainous but important role of devil's legionary. What greater form of vanity than this?

But Warren does not agree. With the Gorgon head of evil ever before him, ever leading him on, he comes at last to what he believes to be the starting point on the authentic road to salvation. He says:

The recognition of complicity is the beginning of innocence.

The recognition of necessity is the beginning of freedom.

The recognition of the direction of fulfillment is the death of self,

And the death of self is the beginning of selfhood.

All else is surrogate of hope and destitution of spirit.

Had these paradoxes come at the end of a different story or had they been the observations of an author with more faith in human strength and its ability to create goodness, we might have been able to gather some truth from them, since they are, after all, generalizations. But coming as they do at the end of an attempt to name love a deceiver who must be banished from the virtuous life and to proclaim evil a powerful despot who can be overthrown only by destroying the heart in which he resides, they provide nothing except an umbrella under which Warren's false assumptions about virtue can huddle undisturbed. Here, the recognition of com-

plicity can imply only the need for perpetual penitence; the recognition of necessity, prostrate submission to remediable wrong; and the death of self, the extinction of man's present hope that by reaching out through strength—rather than weakness—toward his fellow, he can make human love a reality.

It can be said that in the light of Warren's continuous struggle for understanding, his most recent novel, *Band of Angels* (1955), is an acknowledgement, at long last, of the possibility of love; and a rejection of the nihilism which beset his soul so swiftly when, in *Brother to Dragons*, he faced the experience of love for the first time in his writing career.

Unfortunately, however, the shock which the discovery of nakedness apparently induced has not yet worn off, and though there are heartening elements in *Band of Angels*, though the old fears have been deliberately cast aside, Warren's awareness of his need to get rid of them conflicted with the maturer and freer forces in his consciousness and obliged him to conduct his novel through a series of mildly exotic, sensational side-shows before leading it into the green fields of moral understanding.

For once, the protagonist's final insight is not a Puritan negation or worse, yet this protagonist, Amantha Starr—a Southern belle by training and in appearance who is thrown by outrageous and improbable fortune into Negro slavery—goes through what seem like sensual nightmares rather than events in the waking world or in chronological time before her story takes belated roots in its final circumstances. Though Amantha in the end acknowledges the reality of love and possesses a faith in the possibility of human self-renewal, her previous experiences are so bizarre as to make us feel that Warren, in granting her an ultimate revelation, was merely divesting her of a costume she had been wearing in a swash-buckling historical romance, and was not actually bringing to fruition a process of

inward growth. It is also a matter of some importance and much curiosity that *Band of Angels*, the first of Warren's works to admit the possibility of love, is the story of a woman, rather than of a man. It is as if Warren, in allowing humankind a new receptivity to a glorious but heretofore treacherous belief, decided to let a woman go first to test its safety. This in itself is not blameable but merely worthy of note in an essay devoted to the history and development of Warren's struggle with the hedonist and Puritan forces in his and our experience.

What does, however, limit the enthusiasm we have been waiting so long to accord Warren's work is the aforementioned artificiality which governs so much of the story. In order to say, quite reasonably, that love becomes possible once one has achieved freedom from slavery, Warren found it necessary to strain the literal possibilities of human bondage and to inflict all these extremes upon his heroine. As a result, the true theme of the novel—namely, that freedom from bondage can be achieved only by oneself and not through the dispensation of another person, that the creation of the conditions for love are dependent upon an act of will—shines like a real star over a landscape in an animated cartoon.

Yet, let it be acknowledged that Warren, though he ironically reversed himself by writing a good conclusion to a bad novel, has at last recognized that love is mankind's guiding moral light in his spiritual journey. It will be interesting to see whether, in his next work, Warren retains the interest and desire to follow it or whether he loses sight of it and returns to the darkness of the Puritan night. One thing is certain: he can no longer ignore it, and since he is too imaginative and resourceful to repeat himself, neither is he likely to try again to extinguish it as he did in *Brother to Dragons*.

The choice for Warren at this point, one might say, is either to turn into a comic artist, which seems unlikely, or to

wed his tragic sense to his new-found faith in love, which seems the more available if no less difficult avenue for him and one which is particularly attractive since, in terms of this essay, it would mean a synthesis of the best insights of Puritanism and hedonism. And if Warren has truly found within himself new well-

springs of confidence in life, perhaps the angels will not, in his next work, withhold from him the success they have denied him on so many occasions in the past, the success which his fine intellect and developed talent seem to promise. For the angels, as is common knowledge, have always been on the side of hope.

Articles Wanted!

Listed below are subjects (not titles) of articles which *College English* would like to print. These subjects are of major professional concern, and any writer should take scholarly account of previous and current work in the field in order to be as authoritative as possible. If you are interested in submitting one of these articles—to be no more than a dozen typed pages—please describe your plans and qualifications in a letter to the Editor first.

Examinations: Their rationale, efficacy, and variety in literature and/or language-arts courses

Discussion vs. Lecture: Comprehensive evidence for the comparative superiority of one method over the other in certain circumstances

The Types of Literature Course: Its merits and demerits

The Historical Survey of Literature Course: Its merits and demerits

Tested Audio-Visual Aids (apart from television): For literature and/or language-arts courses

Relationships between Colleges and High Schools in English: Just how important are they, and what should be done about them?

Great Teachers of English: Their equipment, attitudes, and techniques

How to Teach a Specific Literary Field: E.g., medieval British, seventeenth-century poetry, Colonial American, the modern novel

Current Projects in Improving Teaching: What, why, where, and how successful?

How to Go About Publishing a Text-book or a Scholarly Book

How to Go about Getting a Post-Doctoral Fellowship: At home or abroad

NCTE Luncheon at September MLA Meeting

The College Section will meet at luncheon on Tuesday 10 September 1957 at 12:30 P.M. in the Tripp Commons Room of the University of Wisconsin. Professor J. N. Hook of the University of Illinois, Executive Secretary of NCTE, will speak on "College English Teachers: Leaders or Critics?" The local chairman in charge of arrangements is Professor Robert C. Pooley, Chairman, Department of Integrated Liberal Studies, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Round Table

The Freshman Research Paper

HOPE AT LAST?

ERIC M. STEEL

The fervor with which English instructors cling to the research paper while fads and philosophies come and go indicates their conviction that a good term paper, like good government, is a thing well worth striving after.

What makes so many term papers bad, of course, is that they are not written to be read by anyone in particular. In vain does the instructor enjoin his students to write for him or for their classmates. The students sense the unreality of the situation and resort to passive resistance. To be readable, a term paper must be written for a *real* audience, and preferably one which the writer regards with mingled fear and compassion. Fear of its censure and even ridicule will make him bend every sinew to avoid these; compassion for its ignorance and immaturity will induce him to do all in his power to make his paper simple, clear, and interesting. In short, the ideal audience for a college freshman should be a group of eighth-graders, and having just graded a batch of term papers directed at such a group, this instructor feels it probably is.

When he suggested that his freshmen dedicate their papers this semester to the eighth grade in the adjoining Campus School, some hailed the idea with enthusiasm, and the coolness of others soon thawed under the obvious eagerness of the eighth-graders to be written to. For the first time these freshmen found themselves wanted as writers. They were surprised and flattered!

The eighth-grade teacher asked each of his students to turn in a topic on which he would like to be further informed, and the result was a list of questions most of which indicated a lively concern with teen-age problems: "Should teen-agers go steady and if so at what age?" "Do you think parents should but [*sic*] into teen-age social life?" "Is it good for teen-agers to have soror-

ities?" "Do you think comic books give teen-agers ideas?" "Can a teen-ager afford to keep a horse?" "How do you find out what career is best for you?" Each freshman selected one of these (or suggested one of his own and had it approved by the group), and the research project got under way—guides, indexes, trade journals, and clipping files being ransacked as usual. This time there was a difference, however: the researchers went about their business with a keener sense of its importance than ever before.

Since obviously only stories could be counted on to appeal to blasé eighth-graders, it was agreed to drop the name "term paper," fraught as it was with such sinister associations, and to produce instead "research stories." Thus a new assignment was born, and it was both amusing and refreshing to watch the effort made to capture and maintain reader interest.

Most of the writers wisely decided to start off with an anecdote, and heeded as never before their instructor's exhortation to "go concrete," piling up lively and significant detail. One student, responding to a request for information on socialized medicine and fearful of boring her audience, sensibly set out to show how, in the light of her research, socialized medicine would not solve the health problem confronting the family of one of her readers. Another girl, eager to recommend an academic high-school course in preference to a commercial one, decided to go not only concrete but dramatic, and turned in an account of a baseball game between Academics and Commercials, with each sound argument represented by a run! Most reassuring was the statement of yet another student, who confided in conference that into this term paper at least he would not dare to put anything he did not understand himself!

Concern over mechanics was also much

more acute than when the instructor was to be the sole reader. Even the most case-hardened freshman suffered an anticipatory spasm of embarrassment at the thought of having his misspelled words and comma faults triumphantly exposed by students five grades below him. The pleasantly inevitable result was that the papers produced in this project were, by and large, much more interesting and correct than those this instructor has received from any comparable group.

All the stories were evaluated by committees of eighth-graders, and in addition several were read aloud to the entire class. This turned out to be the happiest feature of the undertaking, for it made the cardinal sin of the novice researcher—the bookishness resulting from inability to assimilate the material collected—stand out in all its ugliness, exposed by such comments as “Wasn’t interesting,” “We couldn’t understand,” “How much of it did you write yourself?”

The last criticism particularly delighted this instructor, who has been trying for years to convince students that the footnote is not enough. When a paper is read aloud, the footnote is, of course, non-existent, and all borrowings must be acknowledged in the text proper. This, he it noted, is where they should be acknowledged in every student research paper if the writer is to be kept “honest.” Unless he is required to come out frankly with something like this: “According to Mr. Jerome Feiner, of the New York City Department of Health, loss of life in any future war will be tremendous if the use of bacteriological weapons is not outlawed,”—saving for the footnote the title of Mr. Feiner’s article and the periodical wherein it appeared—he is soon going to have Mr. Feiner *et al.* writing the paper for him, oftener than not without his grudging tribute of a footnote! By our readiness to settle for a sprinkling of footnotes we have made plagiarism easy. By shifting the emphasis from the footnote and insisting—

as those eighth-graders insisted—that all borrowings be worked into the text, we might find ourselves reading semi-original compositions instead of symposia of quotations and near-quotations. Failing that, we would at least be able to distinguish at a glance between what our students had written and what they had copied.

Perhaps the greatest merit of the experiment was the change of attitude induced in the participants. Many a freshman thinks his instructor sets up old-maidish standards of literary virtue which are not merely impossible, but not even worth trying, to attain. When he finds that an eighth-grader has pretty much the same standards, he is likely to be shocked into attention—and action!

Instructors dubious of the practicability of the project will be reassured to learn that only two periods were devoted to joint meetings of the two classes. Even if nothing further had been achieved in these, they would have provided the freshmen with an admirable opportunity for oral reading. Also, should the supply of eighth-graders run low, a seventh grade would doubtless prove as useful an audience. In fact, the best cure for a “bookish” student who has persistently failed to translate his sources into simple language is possibly having him write for a fifth or even a fourth grade.

Finding a group of grade-school children to work with is no problem at all. They are all naturally curious as to what goes on in college and flattered by the prospect of having all these papers produced in their honor. And the resulting rapport between college and elementary school is not the least of the dividends.

Repeated every few weeks, the project might lose its novelty and consequently its efficacy. There seems to be no reason, however, why it should not be tried at least once in every freshman’s lifetime.

Generation of Genres

“Offhand I cannot recall a year within the past decade which produced so few really impressive American novels as 1956.” (Charles Rolo) “At no time in our past has the *Atlantic* received as many poems as are now submitted to us.” (Editor)—*The Atlantic Monthly*, February 1957.

THE USE OF LITERATURE IN THE FRESHMAN RESEARCH PAPER

KENNETH M. ENGLAND

In the freshman courses, more of us than not have come to allowing or preferring all sorts of writings as proper for the student to read. We have the inclination to accept and approve the literature of information rather than the literature of imagination to the extent that *Growing Up in New Guinea* is likely to be regarded as more proper reading in a freshman English course than is *Typee*. To cite an extreme example, I have heard of a freshman English course in which the complete selection of readings for the nine-hour course is *Growing Up in New Guinea*, *Patterns of Culture*, and the one-volume redaction of *The Golden Bough*. All these are very respectable offerings, to be sure, but not one of them is proper in a freshman English course.

My concern here is that in the freshman course in which the student writes a library paper he should read from the literature of imagination and make his paper from that reading. If a student is going to write about conditions in the South after the War, he should do so after reading *Barren Ground* and *Red Rock*, not after reading *Tenants of the Almighty* and *The Human Geography of the South*. In other words, he should read literature and not socio-political disquisition. In history, possibly, the choices might be reversed.

Some teachers have decided that the library paper is so cumbrous that it ought not to be required, but I think most freshman English teachers still require this research project somewhere in the course. With some, the emphasis is on the format, with much blood, sweat, and tears expended on the bibliography and footnote form. Those items do not seem to me to be worth making a principal objective. Indeed, some simple forms which would obviate the garlands of *ibids.* festooning the bottoms of the pages are best. Whether one uses a comma or a colon in the bibliographic entry is of no great consequence. What is of grave consequence is that the student read well, formulate his plan well, and write well. And I think his reading should be in literature.

He will read other forms in his courses or according to his interests.

The English teacher need not hesitate to set himself forth about the kind of reading required for the library paper. Many teachers are inclined to allow the student to select his subject under the impression that he will, therefore, read and write with a consuming interest about some absorbing concern of his own. This usually results in papers on "Airplanes before the Wright Brothers," "The Sublimation of Coal Tar," "The Fight between the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac*," "The Springfield Rifle," "How to Organize an Office Force of Fifty," and "Was Shakespeare Lord Bacon?"—this last having been written by someone who is concerned with pleasing the teacher. And one is hard put to it to discover that the readings and writings are the better because the student had ostensibly selected what he was interested in.

Then, many teachers have interests of their own which they ask the student to write about. Some are interested in anthropology and require all the papers to be about the origin of man. Others are interested in politics, sociology, philosophy, railroads, race problems, and cabbages and kings, and require the students to read, discuss, and write on those items without relation to the literature of imagination.

The best reading and the best writing can result from requiring the student to work with literature. And literature should not be foreign to the freshman English teacher's knowledge or interest. And he should gladly read it and gladly teach it whenever and wherever in any English course reading is to be properly considered.

In my classes I require that the library paper be on this general subject, Recurrent Themes in Four Novels by a Novelist. I select six novelists, usually Faulkner, Hemingway, Lewis, Marquand, Ellen Glasgow, and DuBose Heyward, and also the four novels from each author for the student to read. He then reads them and writes his paper. He may, of course, read anything

else from the author he chooses. Then, to get him into the library, I require that his bibliography contain eight other items not by the novelist but about him or his work. I can provide him with that bibliography if necessary. Teaching the paper is easy, for everything applies in some way to all.

As the student reads Faulkner, he will see that he can entitle his paper "Faulkner's Women," "Faulkner's Men," "Intuition in Faulkner," "Vegeance in Faulkner," "Family Decline in Faulkner," "Sartorises Over Snopeses," "Faulkner's Negroes," "The Villains in Faulkner," "Time in Faulkner." Any one of these formulates a recurrent theme. The other authors offer a similar variety.

Now, in the paper, I do not expect or exact any highfalutin scholarship or literary criticism, although I am always pleased to get it. I merely exact and expect the student to read from a selection of novels that have inherent interest for the common reader and to write correctly and coherently of some sequence of incident, character, or idea. Nor do I select only the classic novelists and novels but rather the living and recent American novelists and novels that the freshman in a required English course may read with immediate interest and understanding. It is not my view that *Tom Jones*, *Sir Charles Grandison*, and *Ulysses* are proper to require in a freshman course merely because it is generally conceded that they are literary masterpieces in the novel form. The student must read in the writing that it is reasonable to expect the common reader to read in, and the common reader has intelligence but not erudition. He un-

derstands human behavior but not tortuous codes of symbolism.

In the place of using novels, one might use plays, essays, biographies, short stories, diaries—anything that the best judgment of the current times and of the past times adjudges to be the literature of imagination. Gibbon and Grote and Trevelyan are literary figures. And so are Boswell and Sandburg and Marquis James. Muzzey and Mead and Odum are not. And Shirer and Truman and Eisenhower are not.

The plays of Shakespeare, Shaw, O'Neill furnish excellent matter for the freshman library paper. And so do the biographies of Sandburg and Freeman. And so do the short stories of Mansfield, Munro, and Porter. And the essays of Hazlitt, Stevenson, and DeVoto.

Regrettably, I have heard English teachers who teach in colleges of engineering, education, agriculture, and business say that they desire to but really cannot require their freshmen to write a library paper from reading literature. They seem to mean that the student may be asked to read a little literature as a frill to the course but that he must not be asked to deal carefully with much literary matter if he is getting a degree in chemical engineering. And, therefore, he probably never does seriously consider the whole pattern of an author's thought and writing. And if literature isn't seriously worth requiring of prospective teachers, business administrators, and farmers, then what has happened to it?

Note: On this theme, see also the articles in *CE* by Randall Stewart (Oct. 1955) and William Frost (Nov. 1956)—*Ed.*

EXPERIMENT IN FRESHMAN RESEARCH WRITING

LOUIS TAYLOR

An experiment, marked with apparent success in a class at Arizona State College, is offered here for whatever parts of it may be of use in other classes and climes. I divided the class into committees of from four to six with an adviser for each group. Each student was required to report to his adviser at each class meeting, bringing with him all the evidence possible of the work he had done since the last meeting of the

class. There were forty-eight students in the two classes. With five exceptions all reported regularly and cheerfully at each class meeting, with about the usual number of absences. The instructor's desk was a very busy place most of the time for the first few meetings; but as work progressed, students and student advisers worked more and more closely together.

Final papers were submitted first to ad-

visers, who were required to write a detailed history of the progress of each student under their direction and an evaluation of the paper. Some of these reports were as long as the minimum requirement for a research paper.

Here are samples taken from reports almost at random:

Feb. 15. Seven new bibliography cards, and ten note cards. All neat enough to indicate careful work. Has basic outline of paper, which seems to be good but a bit too general.

Feb. 19. Six more bibliography cards. No new note cards. Outline improved and paper seems to be shaping up fairly well. Wants title to be "The Essence of Good Public Relations in Banking," but is willing to try to narrow it to something more specific.

Here is a sample of support for suggested grade:

I really don't quite know how to grade Mr. ———'s paper. It is better than some I have read, including one under my supervision and some under those of other advisers; yet it has several faults. It is too general (see especially pages 2 and 4), yet Mr. ——— has done some very thorough research. His style is not too good. Many of his sentences could be improved by being shortened. There are spots where sentence structure could be questioned (see marginal note on page 1). However, I think this paper is well above Mr. ———'s usual standard of work and is not below average of those papers I have seen. I suggest the grade of C.

The evaluative papers written by the class included most of the advantages and disadvantages of the experiment the instructor could see and a few that he had not been aware of. Student reaction ranged from almost idolatrous praise to guarded disap-

proval. One G. I. who represents well the first extreme, wrote in part as follows: "Never have I been able to accomplish such a writing job as easily as this one. Of course, to Miss ——— I give thanks and appreciation. She was a constant source of guidance and inspiration as my adviser." The other extreme of reaction included the feeling that consultation with student advisers took up too much time. Here is one novel reaction taken from a paper that was, on the whole, strongly in favor of the adviser plan: "Too much student help may make a writer change his style to suit his adviser, who may not be as good a writer as he is. This may be a disadvantage."

The student advisers were especially enthusiastic. It was from them that most of the constructive criticism came. The following suggestions as to changes in the plan if it is to be tried again were included in one or more of their papers: (1) Regular weekly meetings outside class of advisers and instructor to discuss problems and progress. (2) Students' choice of advisers. (In my own classes this does not seem practicable, for some advisers would certainly be overloaded.) (3) All class meetings the first few weeks after initial instruction might be held in the library, where advisers can help students in preparing notes and bibliography. (This suggestion poses several very grave problems but is worth nothing.)

Certainly the plan that has here been outlined is not a cure-all; it is an experiment in progress. So far it has, as one student writes, "Created an atmosphere of informality and ease in which students could write and think better than in more formal English classes."

THE SHORTER RESEARCH PAPER

ELINOR YAGGY

The traditional long library paper in freshman English has several serious faults. The emphasis on one large project frequently leads to the slighting of other equally important phases of the term's work and sometimes even to plagiarism. Few freshmen have the background to handle long, complex problems. Moreover, students will do two kinds of research in college:

general research for lower division courses and specific research for advanced courses. Both techniques cannot be taught in just one paper. And one paper is not enough to put students at ease with research techniques. The solution is obviously to have two or more shorter papers. But that raises another problem: since a certain irreducible minimum has to be covered for even the

simplest project, how can the student write several papers without overworking himself and the library, collecting the material for these several projects?

Attempting to meet these problems, I concurrently tried two different approaches. In both, each student chose a subject he thought he would like to follow through several papers. Thus the initial groundwork could all be done at one time. One group wrote two papers, the first a general survey of the subject chosen, necessarily somewhat narrowed. For example, the World Health Organization was limited to a survey of WHO in India; education for young children was limited to the equipment in typical nursery schools. The second paper took a smaller phase of this general subject and expanded it. Thus, WHO in India was narrowed to physical difficulties in distributing food in famine areas in India; the equipment in typical nursery schools, to the educational use of such equipment as sandboxes and building blocks in a typical nursery school. Each paper was 600 to 800 words.

Approached this way, limiting the subject became almost unbelievably easy. The students saw immediately the difference in approach and purpose of the general and the restricted methods. Documentation improved with the two projects as it could not in just one paper. The continuity appealed to them, and the results showed it. And the other phases of writing were not slighted as they are sometimes when all energy is concentrated on one overawing project. Two 600- to 800-word papers simply do not have the paralyzing psychological effect that one long paper has.

The other plan was equally satisfactory. This second group wrote three papers dealing with the same material. The first was entirely out of their heads: the subject they were interested in examining, where they acquired the interest, what they already knew about it (to be divided between actual knowledge, hearsay, and conjecture), how it might be developed and narrowed, and one prominent person who was influential in or had been influenced by the subject. Again the preliminary work for the two subsequent documented papers was so nearly the same that the library work—bibliography and note cards—was usually done for both papers at the same time. The first doc-

umented paper dealt with the general problem and the other with the influence of the man on the subject or of the subject on the man. This was a different kind of narrowing, serving equally well to illustrate the means of arriving at more detailed investigation.

This second experiment had two particular advantages. The preliminary survey from the student's present knowledge kept him from jumping blindly into a field in which he might have trouble. And the paper on the man's relationship with the field illustrated a pointed and coherent method of biographical research. Students often want to write about people, but unless they have some sort of governor their papers are likely to be mere chronological recitals of dates and events without focus. The related field gave that focus.

Although I reserved the right to object if I thought a topic ill-advised, I otherwise allowed all the students free choice of subjects. Their choices reflected many things about them: their religious backgrounds ("Reform Judaism's Sabbath Customs Outside of the Synagogue," "Rabbi Isaac M. Wise"), the courses they were taking ("Liquid Pharmaceutical Preparations," "Syrups"), their future professions ("Human Blood Groups," "The RH Factor"), and their idle curiosities ("Early Uses of Perfume," "Roman Uses of Perfume in Religious Ceremonies").

Both plans entailed a minimum of waste effort. Two documented papers came from the same basic material, thus cutting down the time needed for library research. Both plans gave a chance to generalize once and then develop a smaller unit in greater detail. Both gave repeated practice in the use of research technique. For this one time at least plagiarism was practically impossible: the fraternity files had no store of properly related material. And the students seemed to enjoy it; there were none of the indications of panic the long paper sometimes raises. Altogether it was, I think, the most relaxed, interested, and generally satisfactory term paper quarter I have experienced. I can't pretend that it wasn't still a great deal of work, but it was a great deal less worry. Several 600- to 800-word papers have a less paralyzing effect on the teacher too.

Councilletter

FROM THE PAST PRESIDENT

LUELLA B. COOK

Greetings from Calcutta! Almost immediately after the 1956 convention in St. Louis, I took off for a flight around the world. At this moment of writing I am just about half way around the globe, and my most vivid, recent memories abroad have been the pleasant hours spent with fellow American educators in Bangkok, Thailand, that land of happy, smiling people, working so valiantly with the help of America's ICA (International Cooperation Administration) to improve their educational program. Back home in the United States we are committed to the idea of education for *all* American children, and the task, we know, tests our strength to its limit. In Asia the complexities of that same problem—and education seems the only answer to world tension and strife—rise to what seem like astronomical proportions; yet bravely the teachers carry on.

It was my assignment for the Councilletter to write on the committee structure of the NCTE (that very essential organization of our time and effort and ideas which propels us forward), but aside from my wish to send greetings back home from this faraway land, I would like to stress the importance of just one committee activity which got underway at the St. Louis convention, an importance which has been highlighted by my travels.

Not until my visit to Bangkok did I sense fully the urgent need for teachers who can teach English as a second language, or for methods and materials that will help those

who are seeking quickly to bring to those abroad, so eager to learn, the tremendous resources which are available to them in books written in English. There isn't time to translate all that we know about education into the native language, though that is important, too. English is fast becoming a universal language and the need for adequate teaching of that language abroad is crucial.

At St. Louis, the NCTE Committee on International Cooperation sponsored a session on the subject "How Can We Cooperate with Teachers of English in Foreign Lands?" Participating were teachers from Belgium, Thailand, and the United States, other teachers with experience in Italy, Germany, Australia, and other countries entered into the discussion. Over and over we heard, "We need books. We need better prepared teachers. We need to correspond with American teachers, and we need to have our students correspond with American students." A speaker from the U. S. Information Agency told of the far-reaching program of his group, but said that it needs all possible cooperation from others.

The National Council of Teachers of English is the world's largest and strongest organization of English teachers. What can it do to help appease the hunger for English that exists all around the world? The Committee on International Cooperation and the Committee on Teaching English as a Second Language are searching for some of the answers. They may call on you for help.

SEVENTH WORKSHOP ADDED

A one-week workshop, at Cornell University, has been added to the six previously announced, according to word from NCTE headquarters. These workshops are all co-sponsored by the Council, in co-operation with colleges and universities. The complete list is as follows:

Alabama College, August 5 to 23. Emphasis on oral and written communication.

Leader, James Mason, Indian Springs School, Helena, Ala., assisted by members of the Alabama College faculty. Three semester hours of graduate or undergraduate credit. Detailed information from Prof. M. L. Orr, Sr., Alabama College, Montevallo, Ala.

Stanford University, July 15 to 19. Theme: "The Teaching of Critical Thinking

in English Courses." Leader of this Fifth Annual Pacific Coast English Conference will be Prof. Alfred Grommon of Stanford University, to whom questions may be addressed. Among the speakers will be Lou LaBrant, Virgil Whitaker, and Helen Schrader.

Purdue University, June 10 to 28. Areas for study: elementary linguistics, historical and structural grammar, usage, composition teaching, English curriculums. Three hours graduate credit. Visitors welcome. Visiting lecturers. Detailed information from Prof. Russell Cosper, Dept. of English, Purdue Univ., Lafayette, Ind.

Iowa State Teachers College June 17 to 28. Emphasis on adolescent literature. Director, Mark Neville, with cooperation from ISTC faculty. Two semester hours of graduate or undergraduate credit. Detailed information from Prof. John Cowley, Dept. of English, Iowa S.T.C., Cedar Falls, Iowa.

Cornell University, July 8 to 13. Consideration of reading, writing, linguistics, literature, supervision, curriculum. Led by

Mrs. Milacent Ocvirk, with guest speakers and assistants. Two hours credit. Detailed information from Mrs. Milacent Ocvirk, 1805 Slaterville Rd., Ithaca, N.Y.

North Texas State College, June 3 to July 12. Divided into two three-week sessions, the first emphasizing composition, the second, literature. Led by Prof. E. G. Ballard, with J. N. Hook present for half of each three-week session. Credit for each session. Detailed information from Prof. Ernest S. Clifton, Dept. of English, N. Texas S.C., Denton, Tex.

Marshall College, June 24 to July 12. Emphasis on teaching reading in junior and senior high schools. Led by Hardy R. Finch, chairman of the NCTE Secondary Section. Three hours of graduate or undergraduate credit. Detailed information from Dean, Teachers College, Marshall College, Huntington, W.Va.

Those planning to attend any of these seven workshops should notify as soon as possible the person named above.

To K.E.G., The Teacher

S. P. ZITNER

Mildest doctor, at whose feet I sat. . .

And no word more will suffer to go in rote
To you, who wore a farmwife's downright hat
And witch's shoes, yet would so elegantly quote

Words new again, and into deeds, and charm the surly
Contexts of the true, that classroom voices
Dared their home note, and every bell rang early.
And chalk squeaked that we had grotesque choices.

You were the worst and kindest of my committee;
It is bitter we made so clumsy a goodbye
Because I had forgotten Vico, and you an official tea,
And neither of us found reasons, or would try.

Now at your sparkling grave the crocus flouts
Grief and the mortal question. But you were
Always concluding with some famous doubts
Whose only answer is the questioner.

Current English Forum

SLOW AND SLOWLY

HAROLD HOLDEN

The question on *slow* and *slowly* (*CE*, Oct. 1956) is sensibly but not completely enough answered by M. M. Bryant. That is, her advice to use "whichever form is more euphonious in the sentence" tells us to do what we have always done anyway; it doesn't tell us why we might have done it, or how we might improve our ear.

I doubt whether many of us can improve our ear—much, anyway. But there is an aspect of this confusion which ought to be faced, if not settled. Here are two sentences: (1) The man spoke loudly; (2) The man spoke loud. It is obvious that the first tells how, in what manner, the man spoke. So does the second, according to M. M. B.—and most freshman grammars. Not so: the second really tells us that the sound that reached the listener's ear was loud;

here, *loud* is a predicate adjective, and the true sentence, before ellipsis, reads: The man spoke (with the effect that his voice was) loud.

We are not confused about the word *fast*; we never say, The man walked *fastly*, because we sense (unerringly, which is a compliment to the folk brain!) that the word refers to *effect*, not to *manner*. In all such cases we shall find that the difficulty will be removed if we can decide which—effect or manner—we intend to convey. I find this a fascinating point: note that you cannot decide when the manner and the effect are or seem to be one. But "The man walked *slowly*" conveys an impression about the man's state of mind rather than information about his gait: it is because if all the writer wished to say was that he covered little ground per unit of time, he would (or should) have said so: The man walked *slow*.

Questions on usage should be sent to the chairman of the NCTE Committee on Current English, Professor Margaret M. Bryant, Department of English, Brooklyn College, Brooklyn 10, N.Y.

Letters to the Editor

ON "A SHORT PRIMER OF EDUCATIONESE"

Note: Sheldon Zitner's Bierce-like glossary in the Oct. 1956 issue doubtless raised as many hackles as chuckles, but contrary to the Editor's expectation, only seven readers mailed the reactions to him. Of these, three were pro and four were con; two of the pro's and one of the con's granted permission to reprint. Representative selections follow: "The article . . . is a little gem. I think all of our faculty should read it. May I have your permission to duplicate copies of this article to brighten up a faculty meeting?" "On behalf of the *Round Table* newspaper I seek your permission to reprint the Glossary of Educa-

tion[ese]. . . . The *Round Table* newspaper is the X College student weekly and has a circulation of approximately 1,000. Our paper is interested in reprinting the Glossary because of its direct relationship to the X College community." "Education has two purposes: to raise, continually, the level of the bottom; and to take the lid off the top. These purposes (not AIMS) can reach fulfillment only if educators themselves respect each other. . . . *College English* can ill afford to publicize (even with tongue-in-cheek) any idea such as defining the 'Teachers College.' . . ."

News and Ideas

TEACHERS WHO HAVE ALWAYS wanted to write fiction but who just can't get anything finished may be stimulated by the example of George Simenon, the Franco-Belgian who lives in America, as revealed in an interview with Carvel Collins (M.I.T.) published in *The Paris Review* (Summer 1955) and reprinted by the M.I.T. Department of Humanities. Simenon, who turns out six novels a year and who once wrote a novel in twenty-five hours, has to get his doctor's approval of his blood-pressure and then "live like a monk" while he writes a novel—all for the length of eleven days.

THE CURRENT CRUSH WHICH EDUCATION and business have on each other is encouragingly maintained in the 19 January *Saturday Review*. A symposium of viewpoints comes from the president of Dupont, the chairman of Armstrong Cork (and former NAM president), and the Columbia dean of business.

IF YOUR CLASSES COULD STAND A little literary or linguistic spice, there are two items at hand guaranteed to provoke or provoke. One is the review of Anne Morrow Lindbergh's *The Unicorn and Other Poems* by John Ciardi (Rutgers) in the 12 January *Saturday Review*, a good old-fashioned hatchet-job, the kind rarely seen in these days of bland commercial reviewing. The angry letters of reaction take up the whole letter space of the 2, 9, and 16 February issues, and the last issue contains Ciardi's self-defense ("The Reviewer's Duty to Damn") and Norman Cousins' editorial adjudication. (The 16 February *Saturday Review* also contains its annual survey of Tools for Teaching—seven pages plus two book reviews.) The other item is the transcription and classification of "Phonemic and Analogic Lapses in Radio and Television Speech" by R. C. Simonini, Jr. (Longwood) in the December 1956 *American Speech*; you know—the classic bloopers from "Hoobert Heever" down to—well, *AS* prints things you'll never see in *CE*!

MORE TESTIMONY IN THE CURRENT argument about whether or not colleges affect the writing of the writers they hire is provided in the *Bulletin* of the Humanities Association of Canada, where a half-dozen poets offer their views. John Stedmond (Saskatchewan), the secretary-treasurer of the HAC, contributed an article on criticism to the May 1956 *CE*.

FOR THE FACTS AND SIGNIFICANCE of current activities in the profession, teachers should follow the monthly *Phi Delta Kappan*. The February issue, for example, follows up President Gould's (Antioch) statement, "I am convinced that the tremendous and terrifying problems which suddenly face higher education in America are fortunate," with a plea for an intellectual elite by Douglas Bush (Harvard) and one against by Frank H. Bowles (CEE), an announcement by Michigan State of a new Honors College to open there next fall, and a reprinting of the Oregon-Laird (Nevada) Plan for Freshman English from the December 1956 *CE*.

STUDENTS OF TENNESSEE WILLIAMS will find his own statement of his "philosophical position in regard to emphasis on love-relations in writing" in the undergraduate *Syracuse Review*. In a letter politely answering charges by a Syracuse student writer, Williams also says that his "two favorite modern playwrights are Bertold Brecht and Samuel Beckett, neither of whom uses my method of getting at truth. . . ." Nothing about "Baby Doll," the best movie to come out of Hollywood in years.

BABY DOLL IS EXPLORED IN FIVE pages of prose and pictures in *Life* for January. Although willing to admit possible artistry in the film, *Life's* writer has selected illustrations that go a long way toward showing why it is objectionable to some. The script is now available in a Signet edition and makes interesting reading. The poor man's Dostoevski, one might call it.

WILLIAM ARROWSMITH (RIVERSIDE, currently in Italy) writes of "Literature and the Uses of Anxiety" in the Autumn 1956 *Western Humanities Review*. Arrowsmith says that "there is hardly any modern literature of worth which does not know the Medusa-face of Anxiety"; and he quotes from Eliot, Yeats, and Auden, and refers to others like Faulkner and Camus to demonstrate. Anxiety has become, he finds, "a new convention, a kind of pastoral or alienation." Its roots are in a notion of the utter displacement of reality, its symptoms such items as feelings of terror, of increased powerlessness, of being trapped in the labyrinth, of impending violence, of "prior guilt." Literature in such a situation, Arrowsmith believes, can be diagnostic; it can give us the dimensions of the trouble, can show us a complete picture of our reactions to it, can demonstrate the extent of our twentieth-century predicament. By doing these things literature can provide at least a partial cure by making us face the abyss; for the writer himself the very act of writing brings a kind of order that alleviates anxiety. Arrowsmith closes his provocative and useful article by implying a solution: the development of "skills of proportion and loving self-mockery" to keep us sane in this age of anxiety.

BROWNING WAS A GENUINE POET of birds, according to Thomas P. Harrison in the *Review of British Studies* for October 1956. He surveys birds in Browning's work and finds 72 species mentioned, 12 more than Tennyson, who has a great reputation for being for the birds.

THE WALT WHITMAN NEWSLETTER, now (since March 1956) issued by Wayne State University Press, devotes 19 pages of the December number to a useful printing of a hitherto unpublished Whitman notebook of 1855-1856. This notebook, one of several begun soon after the first edition of *Leaves of Grass*, is of exceptional value, according to Harold W. Blodgett (Union) who annotates it.

HOW GOOD A TEACHER ARE YOU? What makes you think so? Wilbert McKeachie (Michigan) summarizes the prob-

lems and the recent literature on the subject in the Winter issue of *Improving College and University Teaching*. He points out that administrators usually do one of three things about the quality of the teaching: (1) they ignore it in considering raises and promotions (try to explain that to your friends outside the teaching profession); (2) they evaluate teaching effectiveness informally and subjectively (that is, by keeping their ears open at cocktail parties)—a method which McKeachie feels is highly inaccurate; (3) they utilize student ratings. But just how accurate are student ratings? It's hard to say, since we have no sure index by which to measure them. Out of all the confusion of ratings and opposition to ratings, McKeachie draws some interesting facts: students prefer teachers with the rank of associate professor rather than those with higher or lower ranks; they tend to like teachers with advanced degrees rather than those with only bachelor's degrees; but the teacher's knowledge (either of his subject or of teaching methods) does not seem to influence his students' rating of him. *But teachers with published research were rated higher than those without publications.* McKeachie's bibliography is almost as long as his article and is an excellent introduction to a confusing but important field.

HENRY GREEN IS A NOVELIST rather than a poet, but Edward Stokes (Tasmania), in the December *Australian Quarterly*, finds that *Living, Loving, Caught*, and the other Green novels have the intensity and symbolic meanings that we associate with poetry. A "terrorist of language," he continues the tradition of Joyce and Woolf. Stokes feels that Green has been unjustly neglected even though Auden has called him "the best English novelist of his generation."

HENRY GREEN'S NEGLECT IS THE subject of an article in the Winter *Kenyon Review* by James Hall (U. of Washington). Like Stokes, Hall feels that Green has been overlooked by critics, an error which he explains on a basis of Green's comic gifts and the modern embarrassment in writing about comedy. Green's talents are witty, personal, and specific, while the critic, es-

pecially one surveying a novelist's whole output and its direction, tends to be abstract, serious, and impersonal. Hence Green is unjustly untalked of.

FRANCIS FERGUSSON HAS COMPLETED a new book, *The Human Image*, and the introduction appears in the *Winter Kenyon Review*. The essays which comprise the book fall into three groups: the modern theatre, Shakespeare, and critical attitudes. He proceeds, he says, from Allen Tate's dictum that a writer's function is "to render the image of man as he is in his time."

WHAT KILLED METAPHYSICAL POETRY? George Watson (Oxford) argues in the October 1955 *Journal of the History of Ideas* that it was a change in critical theory—a change which he illustrates from the writings of Thomas Hobbes: the metaphysical conceit for Hobbes was mere sound without meaning. T. M. Gang (also of Oxford) answers Watson in the June issue: the metaphysical conceit had its origin in the tendencies of poets like Donne and Herbert (because of their training and intellectual climate) to play with concepts in a manner derived from the scholastic metaphysicians—particularly, the metaphor of speaking of the movements and connections of souls as if they were material objects. But when the assumptions of scholastic metaphysics became meaningless (after about 1650), poetry employing these devices became stale and the popular taste for it disappeared. In passing, Gang suggests another reading of the conceit in Donne's "Valediction," which he says he got from "J. C. Maxwell in a private communication": the first image of the poem is not that of a compass opening and closing its legs, but of a compass seen in front elevation while it is drawing a circle. When the compass is seen from this angle, the moving foot will appear to recede from the fixed, or to approach it, and the legs will appear to slope and grow erect, as the compass turns. In the last stanza Donne switches from the elevation view and the apparent opening and closing of the legs to a plan view in which we see the actual completion of the circle.

IN A BOLD AND WIDELY-HAILED gesture of broadcasting statesmanship, the National Broadcasting Company recently celebrated its thirtieth anniversary by offering its production facilities and network lines to the twenty-five hard-pressed educational television stations throughout the United States. In collaboration with the Educational Radio and Television Center in Ann Arbor, the network is completing production plans for almost a half million dollars' worth of programming in American literature, American government, world geography, mathematics, and music to be piped "live" to the ETV outlets for thirteen weeks beginning March 11. Each weekday, from 6:30-7:00 P.M., E.S.T., a university professor or similarly qualified authority will preside in rotation over his specialty—Albert Van Nostrand of Brown University for American literature. English teachers in the last two years of high school and the first two years of college should find the American literature series an excellent stimulus for their students. Each program will be devoted to one of the following topics: the business man, war writing, novels of the

Far West, American historical novels, the South, the American family, the moral climate, the disinherited, Americans abroad, the novel of adolescence, the nonconformist, the writer's world, "the great American novel." Within each of the categories Professor Van Nostrand will attempt to reveal tradition and continuity by starting with a current bestseller and working backwards into the American past for further examples: e.g., Edwin O'Connor's *The Last Hurrah* will initiate a discussion of *All the King's Men*, *Number One*, and other political novels of the twentieth century on back to works like Bellamy's *Looking Backwards*, or Martin Russ's recent novel of the Marines in Korea will start a discussion leading through *The Naked and the Dead* and *A Farewell to Arms* to *The Red Badge of Courage*. The purpose of the series is to generate popular interest in searching beyond the best-seller lists for books whose pleasures are lasting, if momentarily lost from public view. The producers will use as many paperbacks as possible to make their reading suggestions practical. (*Patrick D. Hazard*)

New Books

Omnibus or Cadillac?

A REVIEW OF CERTAIN OMNIBUS ANTHOLOGIES
PUBLISHED IN 1956

CURTIS DAHL

American college education, it often seems, is governed by the managers of college bookstores. And the single-minded aim of the managers of college bookstores is to make the American college freshman a discriminating reader of the *Reader's Digest*. Or so it would appear from a study of the "omnibus" anthologies for freshman or sophomore courses intended to introduce students to literature. For if it is not for the convenience of selling a student his whole year's supply of reading in one package, it is difficult to fathom the reason for the existence of such huge, elephantine tomes ("Have you any levers to lift me up again, being down?") as Beardsley, Daniel, and Leggett, *Theme and Form* (Prentice-Hall, \$6.75); Jorgensen and Shroyer, *A College Treasury* (Scribners, \$5); Loomis, Clark, and Middendorf, *Modern English Readings*, Seventh Edition (Rinehart, \$4.75); and Wise, Congleton, Morris, and Hodges, *College English: The First Year* (Harcourt, Brace, rev. ed., \$5.50). These all present a series of selections, of varying quality and length, of non-fiction, fiction, poetry, and drama. Each has its own principle of organization or "pitch" to the student. Each has supposedly lively and stimulating introductory materials. Several supply so much help to the teacher that one has a suspicion that they are intended not only for illiterate students but also for teachers who cannot read. Everything is made as easy as possible for everybody, although many of the selections themselves are difficult. About the only thing lacking is any indication that literature does not ordinarily come in neatly pre-packaged, super-market form, done up crisply in cellophane, *Omnibooks*, or stimulative digests.

After looking over these well-printed, strongly-bound, logically-arranged volumes, one wonders whether the American English

Department is afraid of books. Just plain ordinary books. Like novels, or biographies, or volumes of poetry. For a number of years now there seems to have been a trend, salutary in my opinion, against the use of large anthologies in courses in the literature of various periods. The read-the-snippet, learn-the-dates, define-Romanticism-Classicism-Renaissancism-Medievalism survey course with its attendant textbook has been fortunately on the decline. How is it that during this same time the freshman or sophomore "types" anthology has, as is testified by these volumes, burgeoned so vigorously? Are these indeed the beanstalks by which Jack is supposed to climb into literary heaven to do battle with the giant Error? Or are these merely fast-growing weeds intended for the literary nutriment of bovine students in the absence of the real grain (not corn) of literature? Are we back again to our college bookstore? Or do these volumes represent not a recognizedly unfortunate compromise with practicality but a positive theory of literary education? Have they sprung up because of the vast expansion of our colleges and the resultant lack of trained instructors or because of a new, or revised, technique of education?

Probably there are elements of both practicality and conviction here. It is convenient for a student to have to buy only one volume. It is expedient to have a volume easily broken up into assignments for quarters or semesters. Chairmen of large sectioned courses find that they can hold the reins and crack the whip over their twenty-mule teams when there is recognizable, though perhaps artificial, structure provided by a textbook and when teaching aids can assist the unimaginative. On the other hand, all these books are aimed at instruction in the practice of reading literary texts. The authors are striving with gigantic pantings

and some groans to roll the Sisyphean student mind up to an understanding of what literature is and what it seeks to do. All are concerned also with the uses of various genres and their interrelationships. All this is thoroughly commendable. But in their attempt to organize and subtly indoctrinate in literary values, do not editors give a false impression of literature by leading from the essay about dating or football to the abstruse poem by T. S. Eliot on the Dantesque rose of salvation? Literature is not an orderly science of expression. Its values lie not in a rational Platonic ladder toward abstract perfection but in individual masterpieces of great writing that have little to do with each other except in their integrity of art and their relation to human experience. Stairways such as these, textbooks well carpeted as they are and provided with plush handrails, seem somewhat foolish when they try to reach the stars. One wonders whether such stairways are either practicable or necessary.

Obviously, in most college courses in introduction to literature there is the complicating element of student themes. Side by side with the attempt to show the student the function and beauty of literary art goes the enormously laborious task of teaching him to write himself. Thus, for instance, *College English: The First Year* conveniently includes the Hodges Harbrace *College Handbook* and even provides instruction in speaking and listening. *Modern English Readings* suggests topics for student themes; furthermore, a *Manual of English Prose Composition* geared to it is available. In all the anthologies the first selections are essays; and in all they are on subjects familiar to the student—"Advice from Home" (*A College Treasury*), "College Life" (*College English*), "Early Years" (*Theme and Form*), biography (*Modern English Readings*). Explicitly or tacitly, these essays are evidently intended to provide stimulation or topics for student papers.

Yet what does this extraneous purpose do to the primary purpose of providing reading material? It certainly dictates the inclusion of material that would not otherwise appear. It may even hint to the student that he too can write true literature. Most students can't. In the realm of composition,

then, the Jacob's ladder is like the stairway in *Kidnapped*—leading dangerously nowhere. Beginning in good faith to imitate, say, Edna St. Vincent Millay's letter on college life or to reply to David Riesman on the role of parents, the student conceives that he is a budding Clarence Day or Robert Hutchins. But what happens when in *Modern English Readings* he reaches Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind" or in *Theme and Form* he encounters Shaw's *Arms and the Man*? Is he to be a Shaw or a Shelley? Is he not going to be discouraged by the increasing gap between his reading and his own writing? An anthology, it seems to me, cannot well serve two masters, for either it will lessen the quality of its literature in order to increase its effectiveness as a basis for writing, or it will cleave to great literature and discourage the student in composition.

But there is a further deeply important question that relates to all these omnibus anthologies. All assume, though in varying degree, that to interest the student one must appeal to him on what is known as "his own level." Hence Loomis, Clark, and Middendorf have included "Campus Life," by Eric Sevareid; Beardsley, Daniel, and Leggett make their pitch toward student autobiography in their groupings on "Early Years," "Family Life," and that perennial interest-rouser "Man and Woman." Again, Wise, Congleton, Morris, and Hodges start frankly with a section on "College Life"; similarly, Jorgensen and Shroyer, who strain throughout to represent "the youthful point of view," sneak up on the student's interest with "Approaches to Education." The uniformity with which these books strive for contemporaneous, "undergraduate" appeal indicates that this kind of approach to literature has proved successful. But has it not great dangers? It seems to assume that students are interested only in what they themselves have literally experienced. Forgetting perhaps that students, yes even freshmen, are human beings, it implicitly sets them apart in a category by themselves. Yet the purpose of college is partly to turn the callow young into full members of the great society of mature men and women. Will catering to their special interests do so?

Furthermore, it seems to me that several

of the editors of these anthologies underestimate the level of student interest. Obviously, to plunge freshmen into the difficult techniques of much modern writing would be a mistake. But there is a difference between difficult expression and depth of subject matter. Throughout their whole course in school students have been reading material "graded" (whatever that means) to their "age level" (whatever that is). When they have reached college, they feel, and they are right in feeling, that they should no longer be talked down to. "Approaches" to literature through dating or football or family life are kid stuff, pabulum. Is it not time, even if only to avoid boredom, that a clean break into maturity should be made? Why not give them literature—without the approaches? The most stimulating freshman classes I have taught, whether at a state university or a liberal arts college for women or Harvard, have been those in which we discussed the best and hence most stimulating literature. It was when we sat apart

on a hill retired,
In thoughts more elevate, and reasoned high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost

that we accomplished most. Far more than other students, freshmen and sophomores like to build their own imposing Pandæmoniums that often, indeed, in devilish wise come crashing down around their ears. But the noise is apt to waken them from their trite dreams in the well-lost false paradises of complacency. Give a freshman an inch to stretch—and he remains an inchworm; give him the skies—and he may try his wings. Do these anthologies, despite their bulk and ponderosity, really offer sufficient scope for artistic appreciation or cultural growth? Or are they lumbering vehicles so jam-packed with carefully sorted temporary passengers that, like many other buses, they have no room for such baggage?

But it is doubtless unfair in a review of four specific volumes to assail the general theory of the omnibus anthology. The reviewer should not, I presume, question the autocracy of the college bookstore, the dogma that appeal must be made to "student tastes," or the faith that good themes come only out of literary selections "close

to the students' own experience" (though all great literature is in some way close to human experience, and the teacher who cannot stimulate writing by a discussion of *King Lear* is not worth his complimentary copies). Let us consider, then, first the principle of selection in these volumes; second, the quality of the selections themselves; and last, the apparatus.

Thousands of satisfied users (so the commercial might go) have found Loomis, Clark, and Middendorf, *Modern English Readings*—first published in 1934—a useful and almost classic exemplar of the omnibus anthology arranged according to types. Beginning with biography and moving on to the personal essay, this volume in a way interrupts its literary progression (if one can use that term) with sections on "Reading and Writing," "Reviews and Criticism," "Speeches," "Exposition" (including the research paper and discussions of modern problems) designed particularly to help teach composition. It then continues with short stories, plays, and poetry, the poems being arranged under various headings based on type. Such an arrangement is simple, unpretentious, and is especially adaptable to the course which separates into different quarters or periods its major work in composition from its major work in literature.

College English: The First Year is also an old stand-by in revised form. Its selections, too, fall into two groups: those "Essays and Articles" that are intended to provide topics, inspiration, and models for themes; and the biography, short story, novel, drama, and poetry selections which form an "Introduction to Literature." The poems are here arranged in what is intended as a gradual ascent in difficulty from straight narrative poems to poems of criticism and philosophy. In each of the groups of poems there is a corresponding increase in difficulty or subtlety. This structure, too, is fairly simple. The classification of the poems, however, may possibly tend toward some unfortunate departmentalizing of literature in the student's mind. Why the witty poem is not critical, why the elegiac poem is not philosophic is hard to say. A competent teacher would, of course, be able to make much out of the editors' necessarily somewhat illogical groupings.

Jorgensen and Shroyer in their *A College Treasury* have a more elaborate plan, grouping the selections under "Approaches to Education," "Thinking and Writing" (these first two parts obviously intended primarily to stimulate writing), and "Basic Literary Types." Under each of the three main headings there is a fairly complicated grouping according to subject (e.g., "The Realms of Science," "Creeds and Values") or form (the short story, drama and film, poetry). There are four different arrangements of poems, the first according to purpose, the second according to traditional form, the third under individual poets, and the fourth according to relevance to the contemporary scene. The third subdivision introduces something desperately lacking in most of these anthologies—the concept that the work of an author is not composed merely of disparate fragments but has an integral unity as a whole. Perhaps the most radical and in some ways the most interesting structure is that implied in the very title of *Theme and Form*, by Beardsley, Daniel, and Leggett. Here there is a stimulating and it seems to me fruitful attempt to group works of various genres under such topics as "Early Years," "In Time of War," "The Nature of Evil," "Scepticism and Faith." Some of the connections, as in "Arts and the Man" and "Achievement and Realization" are necessarily tenuous, and in general the poorer selections best fit the categories, but the scheme has the great virtue of emphasizing the continuity with which literature has dealt with great problems of man's life and thought. For those who prefer arrangement according to forms, a supplemental "Analytic Contents" is provided. Though this anthology is not so overtly aimed at composition as the others, its concern with the relationship between theme and form could be useful in teaching mature writing.

What of the selections? Loomis, Clark, and Middendorf have weeded out "out-moded selections of limited appeal" (is this not a criticism of the original basis of choice?) and have added "selections from the work of the best moderns." Speeches and radio scripts have been added. As the title may indicate, most of the material here dates from after 1870, much from even more recent times. There is little that could

not be understood with fair ease by a bright high school student. The four plays by Synge, Shaw, O'Neill, and Kaufman and Hart make a strong section of modern drama. "The essays and articles" of *College English: The First Year*, say the editors, "were chosen because they are timely but not narrowly dated, mature but within the understanding of the first-year student." This claim is just. I applaud heartily the inclusion of the whole of *Huckleberry Finn*. It is well also to have represented "the poet as wit and humorist." To my taste the poetry of this anthology is of a somewhat higher quality and of greater breadth than that in Loomis and Clark. Donne, Sidney, Shakespeare, Browning, Tennyson, Robinson, Meredith, Hopkins, and Yeats give distinction to the selections.

Jorgensen and Shroyer are a little too shrill in their insistence on "relevance" to the student's own "experience in his increasingly complex world" and on the "recreation" of "real-life situations." Many of their selections, despite their appeal, have little lasting literary value. Margaret Cushman Banning, Reed Whittemore, and David Riesman are all good writers, but should they really be included among the authors that students read in what will for many be their only college course in literature? The choice of poetry in this volume, however, is far better, and the sections devoted to individual poets (Campion, Donne, Wordsworth, Arnold, Frost, Auden, Thomas), buttressed in each case by a critical piece by or on the poet, are admirable. A few of the selections in *Theme and Poetry* share the thinness of those mentioned above, but on the whole the editors of this volume have had their eyes focussed primarily on literary excellence. They assume, rightly I believe, that the student can read the best with profit. Here, then, we find plays by Shakespeare, Sophocles, Shaw, and Thomas; poetry by Homer, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Donne, and the best moderns; considerable excerpts from the Bible, Plato, and St. Augustine; sermons, short stories, biographical writing of recognized masters of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. If students are to be introduced to literature, are not these the authors for them to meet first? If they are never to read again, are not these the authors for them

to have read? If it is argued that such writing is above the capacity of our students—and I do not think it is—let us meet the criticism head-on and demand higher standards, not lower textbooks.

Each of these books has some apparatus for teaching. Whether it is psychologically advisable (however convenient) to bind the *Harbrace Handbook* into a book of enjoyable literature like *College English: The First Year* I somewhat doubt. *Theme and Form* supplies essays on how to read, but can the student read the essays if he can't read? They may, however, be helpful. A pamphlet *Aids to Study* keyed to the book is available. Perhaps *Modern English Readings* is wisest in tucking its "Student Helps" far in the back where they can lie almost unnoticed. *A Manual of English Prose Composition* can be bought to accompany

this anthology, however, and *An Exercise Manual* with lots of blanks to fill in for rainy days is available with *College English: The First Year*. This last anthology includes chapters on speech and listening.

Obviously, needs in textbooks differ among different institutions with different kinds of students. In many ways these omnibus anthologies are convenient, practical, and effective (if one can carry them). But they present the student with literature in an abnormal, theorized, organized, partially predigested form. Books are books. Why can't we teach *them*? Anthologies can never take the place of the genuine article. But if you like to be driven and have all the stops time-tabled and tasty snacks served en route, these lumbering buses are for you. They're well engineered for the purpose. Me? I drive Cadillacs.

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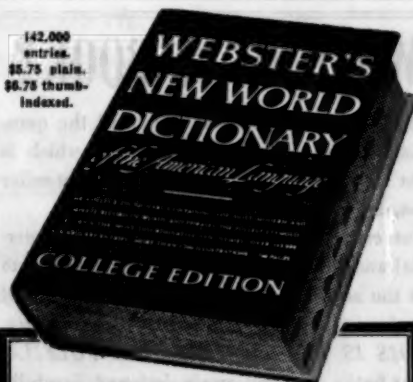
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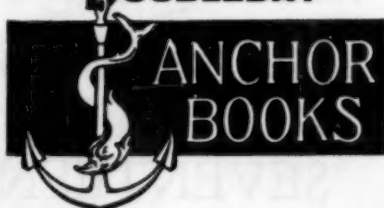
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